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AN ANGLO-SAXON ABBOT

septimo kl. ianuarii. eodem —— ii.

ER SÆLÐ ÐIS hALGE

godspell bediġe heom meodomnyssse þysse halgun

tide. þenu anopeapto ur. ⁊ ur lareow þ we þas halgun tid ge-

ad laudē

ðeon

ðeor

ðarpenlice ⁊ dwenlice peopðiun. godep naman to lofe ⁊ to

gláin.

pulðre. ⁊ uþum ruplum to eceþe hælo. ⁊ to þrohhe. þorðum

humiliauit

þe pulðrap cyning hine rylfne geeadmedde þ he of heo

teárna

ronum oneorðun ahtah. þ he mennisc̄ lichaman acen-

cais

neo þeiġe. þorðun se wiþerwinna forðeġ nolde lætan.

creatura þine

awriani ymbgine

AN ANGLO-SAXON ABBOT

ÆLFRIC OF EYNSHAM

A Study

BY

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TO

ALL READERS

WHO DESIRE THE PROMOTION OF

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, TEMPERANCE REFORM,

AND GENERAL MILITARY TRAINING FOR HOME DEFENCE,

THESE ECHOES FROM THE DAYS OF ÆTHELRED THE UNREADY

ARE DEDICATED

OXFORD,
St. Chad's Day, March 2, 1912.

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PREFACE

THOUGH many manuals appear in the present day on the subject of Church History, the readers of them are not so numerous as could be desired. One cause of this seems to be that books used by beginners often crowd too many centuries into a short compass. For the general reader, the study in detail of one or two periods would better convey the great interest of a subject far too wide to be grasped as a whole. Moreover, quotations of some length from original authorities are needed to afford a vivid and lifelike realisation of the scenes of the past. Among the works which exemplify this assertion, that old-fashioned book, Milner's *Church History*, abounds in well-chosen quotations, and therefore is well worth reading still. Of more recent writings, Maitland's *History of the Reformation* may be mentioned as containing similar valuable extracts. A fund of original information is now available in the "Rolls Series." In the following pages I have endeavoured to awaken the interest of

the general reader (for I do not write for experts), in that old-world Saxon author Ælfric, Abbot of Eynsham.[1] For this purpose I have illustrated his life and character by numerous quotations from his writings, and have added such descriptions of the condition of England in his day as may afford a suitable background to his teaching.

I am greatly indebted to the experts who have studied and translated Anglo-Saxon literature, especially to those whose labours have been directed to Ælfric, such as Dietrich, Wülker, Thorpe, and Skeat. From these writers I have endeavoured to draw such information as would appeal to the generality of intelligent readers. On applying to Professor Skeat of Cambridge to know whether my quotations would be too numerous, he informed me that the Early English Text Society desired their publications to be used and quoted in any way that might benefit students, and he has also given me his own permission to make extracts from *The Lives of the Saints.* I have translated the very interesting *Colloquy for Boys,* the Latin of which does not appear to have been rendered as yet into modern English. I have also translated *The Life of St. Æthelwold,* by Ælfric, from the Latin contained in *The Chronicle of Abingdon.* To this I have appended a short extract from the same Chronicle, referring in the words of a Norman

[1] The Anglo-Saxon name was Egonesham.

writer to Æthelwold's gifts to their Church. Some Latin introductions to several of Ælfric's works have also been given in English. Perhaps I ought to apologize to the reader for translating from the Latin, but I think many persons conversant with modern languages may prefer to read the contents of an ancient one in their own vernacular.

I have to add that in the Bodleian Library I have met with a magazine called *Yale Studies in English*, in which I found an essay on Ælfric of about two hundred pages, by an American lady, Dr. Caroline Louisa White. The first part affords a very interesting sketch of our abbot's Life and Writings; the latter portion consists of Appendices that appeal to experts. After some difficulty in ascertaining whether this learned work could be had separately, I have obtained a copy through Messrs. Williams & Norgate, of 14 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. I commend it heartily to the studious reader.

The name of Ælfric is chiefly known to popular writers on English Church History in connection with his teaching on the Holy Eucharist. But if we study what experts have said of him, we shall find that this important doctrinal question is not the only one on which he claims our attention. Three great aims may be clearly gathered from his writings: First, we may place his strenuous efforts to promote Christian Knowledge among all classes,

and especially among the laity, for whom he evidently thought that sufficient trouble had not been taken. He recalls the exertions of King Alfred in these directions, with a view to imitating them as far as lay in his power. His own great teacher, Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester, had been a genial instructor of boys, and education, both religious and secular, was dear to the heart of Ælfric.

Secondly, he was a Temperance Reformer, not hesitating to bear his witness both before high and low, by word of mouth and by his writings. A self-ruling moderation in meat and drink is constantly set before his hearers and readers. The risk of being enslaved by the fiend of drink is shown by him to have been even then a great one to Englishmen.

Thirdly, when he looked upon the cruel devastations wrought by the invading bands of the Danes, he sought to stir up his indolent contemporaries to defensive military service. For this purpose he placed among his sermons the notable instances of Jewish valour recorded in the Bible, and the books of the Maccabees. And he quotes examples of valour and self-sacrifice in the recent history of the English.

For these three great reasons, the study of Ælfric is not merely an antiquarian subject interesting to historical specialists. He has a message for the present day and for ourselves, for still, after

nine hundred years, three of our pressing needs are Christian Education, Temperance, and Home Defence.

His old monastery of Eynsham has hardly one stone left upon another, but his writings have survived and may still be read with profit. Most of them have been edited by German and English experts, so that an account of them can be produced in a form suited to the general student of our Church History. This is the object of this present little book.

My acknowledgments are due and are gladly offered to the Rev. Walter Skeat, M.A., Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Cambridge; to Mr. Falconer Madan, M.A., Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford; to the Rev. Charles Plummer, M.A., Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford; to Mr. W. H. Stevenson, M.A., Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford; also I wish to express my grateful thanks for frequent help to Mr. C. F. Vincent, M.A., of New College, formerly Sub-Warden of Radley. Moreover, I am much indebted to a learned work by Dr. Darwell Stone, Principal of the Pusey House, Oxford. It is entitled *The History of the Holy Eucharist*, and contains very full extracts from the writings of theologians from the earliest Christian days to the present time, thus enabling any thoughtful student to form his own opinions on this great subject.

It is not within the compass of this little volume

to give a list of the existing manuscripts of Ælfric's works. The student should refer for these to Skeat's *Lives of the Saints* (published for the Ælfric Society by Trübner, London), or to Wülker's *Grundriss der Angelsächsischen Litteratur* (Veit, Leipzig).

I have desired in these pages to represent the teaching of the Anglo-Saxon Church exactly as it was. The lessons of spiritual faith and conduct inculcated by Ælfric are very valuable still. But I should be sorry if I induced my readers to look with favour on any of the superstitions that had mingled with the missionary zeal of Augustine and Gregory the Great. My regret would be increased if they went on to sympathise with the further developments of Roman doctrine that subsequently followed. I am not of those who decry the work of our Reformers, who returned to Scripture and the faith of the earliest centuries.

LIST OF ÆLFRIC'S PRINCIPAL WORKS, CHIEFLY FROM SKEAT

The writings of Ælfric may be suitably divided into those which he wrote before he was abbot, and those which he produced afterwards.

I. *The Catholic Homilies*, in Anglo-Saxon, 2 volumes. Dedicated to Sigeric, who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 989 to 995, probably written at Winchester, 994, 995. Edited by Thorpe, for the Ælfric Society, with a Translation in Modern English, 1844–46.

II. Ælfric's *Grammar and Glossary*, written next to the *Homilies*, about 995; best edition by Zupitza, Berlin.

III. Ælfric's *Lives of the Saints*, 2 volumes, 996 or 997. These were a further set of Homilies, intended for monks, the previous ones being for general use. Edited by Skeat for the Early English Text Society.

IV. 1. *The Pentateuch* and *Joshua*. From these books Ælfric omitted what he thought unsuitable for edification. As regards Genesis, Skeat is of opinion that he translated the first twenty-four chapters, and that the rest was a revision of an older work. It was dedicated to Æthelweard.

2. *Judges*—a metrical or alliterative Homily.

3. *Job*, *Esther*, and *Judith*. *Job* is only given in epitome. *Esther* and *Judith* are printed in Assmann's *Bibliothek der Angelsächsischen Prosa*, vol. iii. Skeat doubts the genuineness of *Judith*, but Assmann maintains it. The aim was encouragement in defence.

V. Ælfric's *Canons* (directions to the clergy), written about 998 for Wulfsige, Bishop of Sherborne, 993–1001. Best edition in Thorpe's *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*. In 1005 Ælfric became Abbot.

VI. About this time Ælfric wrote the extracts from the *Consuetudines of Æthelwold*, for the use of his monks.

VII. Letter to Wulfgeat at Ylmandun, a thane, 1006. (Ylmandun is the modern Ilmington, near Shipston-on-Stour, and about thirty miles from Eynsham.) It has been printed by Assmann. It contains a strong passage against drinking.

VIII. *Introduction to the Old and New Testaments*, written for Sigwerd at Easthealas (probably the modern Asthall, twelve miles from Eynsham). Printed by Grein, *Bibliothek der A.-S. Prosa*, date probably 1008–12.

IX. Ælfric's *Life of St. Æthelwold*, in Latin, date 1006. Dedicated to Kenwulf, Bishop of Winchester, who died that year. Printed in the *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, ed. Stevenson, ii. 255, 256, etc. Rolls Series.

X. Homily on Matt. xxv. 13, written for Æthelwold II., Bishop of Winchester, 1006–13. On the Birthday of St. Mary, printed by Assmann.

XI. Pastoral Letter for Wulfstan, Archbishop of York, 1002–23. This is the last of the writings that can be dated.

XII. *Anglo-Saxon Version of the Hexameron of St. Basil.* Of this Ælfric remarks: "Basil wrote a certain wonderful book called the *Hexameron.*" It was edited by Norman, 1849.

XIII. *Anglo-Saxon Version of St. Basil's Admonitio ad filium spiritualem.* Edited by Norman, 1849.

XIV. *Anglo-Saxon Translation of Parts of Beda de Temporibus, de Temporum Ratione, and de Natura Rerum: a Book for the Laity,* taking the passages which would be most useful and available for them.

XV. Ælfric's *Colloquy for Boys,* afterwards enlarged by his pupil Ælfric Bata. In Latin and Anglo-Saxon; some critics think that the A.-S. interlinear translation was a subsequent addition. Edited by Thorpe, *Analecta Anglo-Saxonica,* 1868.

XVI. *A Treatise on Purity* (*Clœnnysse*). Dedicated to Siegefyrth: "Ælfric, Abbod, gret Siegefyrth freondlice." Printed in Grein's *A.-S. Prosa.*

XVII. Prayers and Creeds in Anglo-Saxon. Printed at the end of Thorpe's edition of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies.*

XVIII. *A Homily on the Sevenfold Gifts of the Holy Ghost.*

Skeat remarks of this list: "The above list contains all Ælfric's principal works, and sufficiently evinces his amazing industry."

One lesser production (placed by Skeat under III.) was a translation from Alcuin (*v. C. L. W.*, p. 133), and Ælfric's Introduction to this runs as follows:—

> "There was in England a remarkable teacher, named Albinus (Alcuin), and he had a great reputation. He instructed many of the English in the sciences contained in books, as he well knew how, and afterwards went across the seas to the wise King Charles, who had great wisdom in divine and worldly matters, and lived wisely. Albinus, the noble teacher, came to him, and there, a foreigner, he dwelt under his rule, in St. Martin's Monastery, and imparted to many the heavenly wisdom which the Saviour gave him. There, at a certain time, a priest, Siegewulf, questioned him repeatedly from a distance, about some difficulties which he himself did not understand in the holy book called Genesis. Then Albinus said to him that he would gather together all his questions and send him answers and explanations."

AN ANGLO-SAXON ABBOT

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION ON EARLY MONASTICISM

BEFORE entering on the career of Ælfric, monk and abbot, it will be well to place before the reader some notice of early monasticism in the British Isles, and to touch upon its successive stages previous to Ælfric's time, so that we may understand the background of his personality. The monasteries of the West began as centres of missionary life, but when that need had been superseded by a parochial ministry, they were mainly devoted to study, prayer, and manual labour. Many of them, however, had sadly deteriorated before the revival of religion under Dunstan and his pupil Æthelwold, the teacher of Ælfric.

We are not accustomed in the present day to associate the idea of monasteries with missionary work. It requires an effort to throw ourselves

back into an age in which these were closely united together.

There are two thoughts that may assist us. We may say, without impropriety, that the Monks of the early ages were the true Salvation Army of their day, and the monasteries were their barracks. Or again we may take an illustration from History.

When the conquering kings of the mediæval times wished to unite to their kingdom a region which they had invaded, they established a chain of fortresses, or castles with garrisons, to enable them to dominate a country which was far from being entirely subjugated; as, for instance, in the case of Edward I. and his castles in Wales. A similar plan was adopted in still earlier times, to assist the peaceful warfare of the Cross.

Monasteries were founded as fortresses of the spiritual life, where the soldiers of Christ were disciplined, and drilled in the devotion and the learning which should prepare them for their inroads into the surrounding paganism. And when needing rest from the conflict, the monks could return thither to recover breath, and to recruit their exhausted strength by times of quiet devotion.

Further, as the castles of the warrior kings existed with a view to the enforcement of order, so the still higher purpose of these fortresses of Church life was to promote civilisation. We recognise, as the monks did, that religion, the

religion of Christ, is the best blessing we can offer to the world, but in those days many other advantages went along with the Christian teaching of the monks. They brought with them the literature not only of their own age, but some of the intellectual treasures of past ages, which they had rescued from oblivion by their diligence in copying books. Moreover, they appealed to the ignorant heathen around them even more quickly by their active interest in the cultivation of the land. Forests, the haunt of wild beasts, were cut down, and agriculture spread its gifts far and wide round the monastic walls, bringing food and occupation where all had been before barren and rude.

Without the establishment of such communities it would have been difficult to provide in any settled way for the promotion of either religion, learning, or the systematic reclamation of wide areas of waste land. And when the rough heathen saw these things going on quietly and peacefully year after year, they were far more deeply impressed than if the monks had merely passed by, appealing to them only by their words.

These remarks, short as they are, may suffice to show the reasonableness of the old monasteries established in yet heathen countries being closely associated with missionary work.

A few words must be added on their condition. To understand this, we must dismiss from our

thoughts the remembrance of those magnificent ruins, which have reminded us as we looked upon them of the grand foundations of the Middle Ages; the early monasteries were very humble buildings. In Ireland a few wattled huts, or cells of stone shaped like beehives, with a small church of the simplest character were surrounded by a fence. Outside it were the barn and cattle shed. In these lowly abodes it was that the early Celtic monks attained a degree of learning which astonished the world; there they studied and copied, and painted in colours of remarkable harmony, the service books, and Gospel books which are still, in the specimens that are left, among the wonders of the past.

An introductory word must not be omitted as to the two great lines on which the monastic settlements were founded. In Ireland the abbots were more powerful than the bishops, in many cases; the latter had not always dioceses, and usually attached themselves to a monastery, their higher status being acknowledged by their ordaining the clergy, but the abbots were the rulers. The Irish monks kept Easter at a different time from the Roman Church, and wore a different tonsure. Ascetic they were, but they do not appear at first to have had uniform rules. The great Irish rule was that established by Columbanus, and he carried it with him abroad to the Continent. It was a very severe rule.

The other great system at that early time, and which prevailed where the Roman influence extended itself, was that of St. Benedict. This became the parent of almost all subsequent monasticism. And as we approach the development of this system in England, the more secluded labours of the monks and their immediate surroundings come into greater prominence before our eyes. Those labours were manifold, but one great idea gave its inspiration to them all. That idea was the attainment of personal holiness, and of Communion with God, through seclusion from the evil that was in the world. Whether the attempt at seclusion was likely to be successful for any length of time may be doubtful, but at any rate we may concede that the condition of the world was such as naturally to dispose religious souls to flee from it rather than to live in it. Violence, cruelty, and vice were rampant in all directions, even personal safety was constantly in danger, and how was it possible to secure amid these external turmoils the quietude necessary for cherishing the inward life? It may frankly be conceded that in such withdrawals from external things there was the danger of sinking into spiritual selfishness, but the principle which guided the withdrawal cannot be hastily condemned. In every age of Christianity those who would be helpful to the souls of others must first discipline themselves, and

personal efforts to put off the old Adam and put on the New must precede any real usefulness in influencing others. Moreover, this effort to attain personal holiness, and to enter into Communion with God, was not the whole of the monastic idea. Association with those who had the same spiritual object in view was an important part of that idea. As each monk sought to grow in holiness, he was to give and receive help from his brethren. The formation of societies for the mutual promotion of sanctification was a large part of the principle of monastic life. In this relationship of monk to monk there was an important safeguard against religious self-absorption and consequent spiritual selfishness. In the East the first monks had been hermits and solitaries; community life was subsequently developed, and there can be no doubt that the prevalence in the West of associated monks (though of course there still existed hermits and solitaries), was largely due to the belief that the opportunities of Christian brotherhood were more in accordance with the teaching of our Lord, and more helpful to progress in the Christian life, than entire absorption in the care of one's own soul.

This great idea of seeking, in seclusion from the world, personal holiness in a brotherhood of mutually helpful souls, attained its first wide development in the West through the Benedictine communities.

Benedict was born at Nursia, in Italy, in 480. He was sent to Rome at the age of twelve, under the care of a nurse, as seems to have been usual in those days. After two years he retired to a cave near Subiaco, having been shocked by the wickedness of the boys in Rome. He was instrumental in the erection of twelve monasteries before he settled at Monte Cassino, and he drew up his rule in 529. It is noteworthy that Justinian closed the philosophic schools of Athens in this very year. Benedict died in 543, and by this time his order had made its way into France, Spain, and Sicily.

Let us see what steps were taken by Benedict of Nursia to promote the monastic idea, that is, the seeking in seclusion from the world, of personal holiness and Communion with God, in a brotherhood of mutually helpful souls. In the formation of the rule, or rules, for his monks, Benedict is distinguished by his knowledge of human nature. He remembered that he was legislating for human beings, not for angels, or for saints made of cast iron. As we study his rules we seem constantly to hear him asking himself the question, How shall I raise mere average human beings, ordinary men, towards saintliness? and saying to himself, "I don't want to produce only a few first-class ascetics, a few exceptional blooms of spiritual life, I want a system tolerant enough, and elastic enough, and endurable

enough to meet the needs of ordinary souls and to raise them gradually." These thoughts lie beneath all his arrangements for the duties of his brotherhoods.

And this taking human nature into consideration was further shown by his desire to develop his men in all the directions of which they were capable, and consequently he took up the avocations usual among monks, of study indoors, and of agricultural labour out of doors, and made them more systematic. The Benedictines became famous through many ages for studiousness, for study of the higher classics as well as of the Scriptures and the Fathers. They were famous as students, as copyists of books, and as agricultural workers. But while the rule of Benedict was characterised by consideration for what human nature could bear, it was of course severe when compared with the ordinary life of Christian people. There were seven services every day, and one in the night. Incessant occupation of one kind or another only ceased during the hours of sleep, and during a brief siesta after the mid-day meal. In the winter the middle of the day, and in the summer the morning and the evening, were given to manual labour, while to study, the heat of the day was devoted in summer time, and in winter the dusk and darkness of morning and evening. On Sunday the monk was to rise earlier, and to substitute reading for manual work. On

Sundays and holidays all the brethren were to receive Holy Communion.

Moreover, while noticing the considerateness which was apparent in Benedict's rules, we must not forget that he required a great stringency of obedience to the monastic vow, and to the authority of the abbot. Over-severe as some of the asceticism of monasteries had formerly been, it was then more open to a monk to give up his vocation and renounce monastic life than Benedict saw to be desirable. Consequently he gave the novices a longer time of trial and probation than appears to have been usual, appointing a year at least for them to try the life, and see if they were equal to it; but when once the vows were accepted, the novice was changed into a life-long monk, and no excuses for withdrawal could ever be allowed. Similarly, while he gave abbots the power of modifying the rules in some points such as food and drink, according to the climate in which their several monasteries might be situated, he required the most absolute obedience in the monks of each monastery to the orders of their abbot.

By these efforts he hoped to remedy the evils which his statesmanlike eye noticed as existing in the monasticism which had hitherto prevailed. Over-severity and excessive mortification were visible here, undue laxity and irregularity appeared there. Benedict hoped that by the orderly influence

of rules which united considerateness with stringent regularity he might avoid the evils which had crept in. Hence it was that his rule was so widely accepted in the West. It was felt that it supplied an order and a regularity which were at once prudent and vigorous, a thoroughly good working system which would bear the test of practical experience. And that test it did for a long time bear successfully. It was compared to Aaron's rod which swallowed up the other rods.

Wilfred is said to have introduced the Benedictine usages into Northumbria and Mercia, and the Council of Cloveshoe in the eighth century recommended its observance. But it was not till the time of Dunstan that it obtained much extension. Æthelwold had sent a monk to Fleury, in France, named Osgar, to study the Benedictine rule in all its strictness. Oswald also, a nephew of Archbishop Odo, had betaken himself to Fleury, and Dunstan himself made some stay in a reformed foreign monastery. Dunstan became Archbishop of Canterbury, Oswald Archbishop of York after holding the See of Worcester, and Æthelwold Bishop of Winchester. These three men used their influence for the revival of religion, which in those days meant the prevalence of monasticism as the salt of the earth.

The character of Dunstan, who was usually accused of cruel and arbitrary conduct by modern historians, has been vindicated by Bishop Stubbs

(v. *Historical Introductions to the Rolls Series*), and we need not go further than the pages of that accurate and learned authority to be assured that Dunstan was an earnest and spiritual leader, and moreover that his support of the Benedictine rule did not betray him into acts of violence. Many of the old monasteries had in the troublous times passed into the hands of secular clergy who were often married men. "But the evidence that proves their marriage, proves also how lightly the marriage tie sat upon them" (v. *Introductions to the Rolls Series*, by Bishop Stubbs). This, however, is not surprising, for marriage had long been under a ban for priests, and the sense that they were in an illicit position produced evils, which since the Reformation have been very rare. No reasonable person can doubt that Dunstan, Oswald, and Æthelwold in opposing the married clergy acted from the best intentions, however mistaken some of us may think them. The same Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester, who was so genial to boys, and whose life Ælfric wrote, "expelled the secular clergy from the two great monasteries of Winchester, from Chertsey, and from Milton, and after doing so carried out his scheme in middle England. He recovered Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney, and established a body of monks in each, under abbots of his own training" (*Introductions to the Rolls Series*).

At Winchester he replaced the seculars with

some of the Benedictine monks that he had trained when he was Abbot of Abingdon. He evidently regarded the marriage of priests as positively sinful, and was full of indignation that the various monasteries, once tenanted by monks, should have fallen into the hands of men living the life of the world. He went about the country on tours of reformation, and at Winchester he enforced the Benedictine rule as abbot of the "Old Minster," and introduced it into the "New Minster." His severity to the married clerks is a strange contrast to the sweetness of character which he showed in teaching the boys of his monastery, which Ælfric both recorded and imitated in after years.

Ælfric, educated by Æthelwold, wrote his life, and followed his teaching, and, as Professor Earle says, he is the chief writer who expressed the motives and aims of the great Church revival of the tenth century.[1]

[1] See that excellent little book, *Anglo-Saxon Literature*, by Professor Earle, S.P.C.K.

CHAPTER II

A FEW WORDS ON ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE

The development of literature among the Anglo-Saxons was due to the introduction of Christianity, though it appears that ballad poetry and Runic inscriptions existed before that time. And as the monasteries were the centres of missionary work, so they were also of the spread of knowledge. The Scriptures, the Mass books, and the writings of the early Fathers were the chief materials of such instruction. The monks, the clergy, and the few laymen who could read would thus gain their education, and some oral instruction would be given in sermons to the people in general. There were two chief sources of scholarship, the Irish and the Roman. Ireland had been missionised in the fifth century, and though it would be an error to suppose that the Irish at large had become Christian, yet there was the keenest eagerness about the Christian religion, and concerning education, in the notable monasteries that had been founded. Lying apart from the Roman Empire, then upset by barbarian

incursions, the Irish monks were at peace to follow out their studies, and the learned men whom they sent out settled in England, and on the Continent, as teachers of Christian truth and secular learning.

Bede tells of the generosity they showed to Saxon students, whom they received into their monasteries, giving them food and instruction without charge. The town of Malmesbury perpetuates the memory of an Irish teacher, Maidulf, and Irish monks were found in the Abbey of Glastonbury. The picturesque Anglo-Saxon alphabet was mainly derived from the Irish writing. There were two Runic letters, the "thorn" and the "wen," and several Roman, but most of the letters were adopted from the Irish missionaries. This writing is supposed to have been originally derived from Rome, and to have been altered by the Irish.

In these remarks we have been somewhat anticipatory, for, while the Irish Church and the ancient Church of Wales were more or less connected, the Anglo-Saxons were left to heathenism for the first hundred and fifty years after their arrival in Britain.

It was not till Gregory the Great was seized with missionary zeal for the conversion of our then remote island, that the first efforts were made on behalf of our forefathers. In the year that St. Columba of Iona died (597), Augustine arrived with the Italian mission in Kent. Abbot Ælfric

justly regarded him as the founder of the English Church,—a Homily in honour of Gregory the Great is prominent among his sermons. Though all that Gregory had aimed at through Augustine was not effected, and the larger part of England was afterwards converted by the Celtic missionaries, yet meanwhile the Latin Scriptures were made known to the Saxon converts in Kent, and became the central point of their literary education. By the year 631 the schools of literature at Canterbury had become models for teachers elsewhere. Aldhelm of Malmesbury, after training in that monastery, studied at Canterbury. He became one of the most distinguished of the early Anglo-Saxon writers.

The other great effort for literary progress was made in distant Northumbria. In the time of Augustine the Roman missionary Paulinus had done good work there, but the results were nearly wiped out by war; and it was the Celtic mission from Iona, under Aidan, that carried out a permanent conversion. Lindisfarne became a Holy Island, from the vantage ground of whose monastery the Church of Christ could be planted on the mainland. The Abbey of St. Hild[1] at Streoneshall produced our first Saxon poet, Cædmon. Moreover, a Northumbrian noble, Benedict Biscop, made six journeys

[1] The names of Anglo-Saxon women did not end with "a." This letter was added when Latin was used. On the other hand, the names of men often ended in "a," as Bæda (Bede).

to Rome, and brought back a large treasure of books, which he stored in monasteries that he built at Wearmouth and Jarrow. It was there that the saintly Bede, studying in this noble library, produced the first History of the Church of England, a work written in Latin and highly valued throughout the Catholic Church.

A school of theology also sprang up in York under Archbishop Egbert, and from it the great teacher Alcuin carried the learning of Northumbria to the Court of Charlemagne. After the devastation of nearly all England by the Danes, King Alfred brought scholars from the schools of Charlemagne to teach his people, and so the results of Alcuin's efforts were returned in kind to the English nation.

It has been already stated that the Anglo-Saxons had an ancient and national ballad poetry before the introduction of the Latin language by the missionaries. After that, Latin represented religion and education, and though the native tongue was also in literary use, yet the Latin culture would predominate. But when Alfred came to the throne, the northern monasteries, the chief centres of study, having been laid in ruins by the fierce and cruel Danes, the knowledge of Latin had sunk into the background. In Wessex, Professor Earle tells us, the native tongue had long been in conspicuous use, and this, combined with the decay of Latin, led Alfred to take to Anglo-Saxon more than might

otherwise have been the case. King Alfred having the highest ideas of duty, was most anxious to raise both clergy and people out of the ignorance into which they had sunk. As soon as he could sheath his sword he took up the pen. Like Charles the Great, he looked everywhere for scholars and drew them to his Court. With their help he translated the books that seemed most likely to be of service in promoting religion and mental culture.

The most important for this purpose was the work on clerical duty written by Gregory the Great called *Pastoralis*, and which has been found helpful, not only by Alfred, but also in the succeeding centuries, and even in the present day.[1] This work Alfred tells us that he translated himself with the assistance of his learned men. A copy was to be sent to every bishop in England, and the one intended for Worcester is now in the Bodleian Library. He also desired to promote all possible education amongst the young; he takes a very liberal view of this duty, and remarks, in the preface to this very translation, that he desired that "all the youth of England of freemen, of those who have the means to be able to go in for it, be set to learning, while they are

[1] A translation of the original Latin of Gregory was made by the Rev. H. R. Bramley of Magdalen College, and published in 1874. It is sometimes read at Retreats of Clergy. The Latin text is also given.

fit for no other business, until such time that they can thoroughly read English writing; afterwards further instruction may be given in the Latin language to such as are intended for a more advanced education, and to be prepared for higher office." Another translation was that of the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great, a series of stories and anecdotes suited to the popular taste of the day. A more ambitious work was the rendering into English of the *Consolations of Philosophy* of Boethius, and in this Alfred inserted many thoughts of his own upon religion. A translation of part of Bede's *Church History of England*, and of the geography of Europe and Asia of Orosius followed. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* also bears the mark of Alfred's reign.

From this slight reference to Alfred's works, we can readily understand the approval that Ælfric expresses for them, while he condemns most of the foolish writing that appeared later on. Ælfric would most deeply sympathise with the effort to reach the clergy through the bishops, and to improve their knowledge and pastoral efficiency, and having himself been a devoted educator by his own books and his personal efforts, he would agree with the wish of King Alfred that knowledge of their own language and of the Latin should be widely spread among the sons of the laity. Both King Alfred and Abbot Ælfric were

entirely single-minded men, putting similar aims before them for the improvement of their countrymen, and rising far above the sordid and selfish aims and quarrelsome tendencies that so widely prevailed in the fair land of England.

About the time of Alfred, Professor Earle tells us that we may place, judging from the diction, the Anglo-Saxon translation of the Gospels. There were also translations of the Psalter before the time of Ælfric.

For several centuries there have been English students who, tearing themselves away from the study of the classics, have passed on to examine with interest the writings of their own Saxon forefathers. Subsequent to the Norman Conquest many of the MSS. survived in the monasteries, and were highly valued by the monks as indicating the antiquity of the foundations to which they belonged. After the disgraceful plunder of these ancient homes of learning by Henry VIII., vast quantities of books were shipped abroad to be sold as waste paper, to the amazement of foreigners. But happily a good many were still left, and the zeal of Archbishop Parker was the means of collecting some considerable remains of Anglo-Saxon literature. These MSS. he presented to his College of Corpus Christi, at Cambridge. Sir Robert Cotton and Archbishop Laud also made valuable collections; many of these ancient books have now been

published by the Ælfric Society and the Early English Text Society. Professor Earle remarks in his excellent little *Manual of Anglo-Saxon Literature* (S.P.C.K.) that our forefathers were the first in all Europe to create a vernacular literature. The German experts—Dietrich, Assmann, Grein—all refer to the remarkable contrast that exists in the amount of our early writings with the few that were produced in Germany. Assmann speaks with satisfaction at having been able to study the great Anglo-Saxon branch of the Germanic languages; Grein laments the little chance he has of completing its exposition, considering the great range of the literature, "the treatment of which would be far beyond the efforts of a single individual." He adds a remark as to the "rich treasures still existing in England in MSS., many of which have yet to be edited." From the work of such experts both in Germany and England, any persons who wish can obtain guidance enough to become thorough students, well read in the language and thoughts of our ancestors.

The *Blickling Homilies*

With a view to understanding the Homilies of Ælfric it is necessary to notice some earlier sermons which were brought to light in 1851, by Mr. Godwin, in the *Transactions of the Cambridge*

Antiquarian Society. They were then the property of the Marquis of Lothian, and were preserved in the library of Blickling Hall, Norfolk. In 1880 they were edited with a modern English translation, by Dr. Morris, for the Early English Text Society, and called the *Blickling Homilies.* Professor Earle tells us that the collection is a motley one, of various ages and quality. "The older Homilies are plainly of the age before the great church Reform of the tenth century. One of the sermons bears the date 971, imbedded in its context; and this is probably the latest date in the book, and is twenty years before the Homilies of Ælfric."[1] These preceding writings are evidently referred to by Ælfric, when he says, "that he translated his discourses out of the Latin, not for pride of learning, but because I had seen much heresy in many English books, which unlearned men in their simplicity thought mighty wise."

Ælfric refers to this fault in writing about the festivals of the Virgin Mary, where he deprecates the recent and erroneous additions made respecting her. For instance, when the Angel Gabriel delivers his message, the impressive simplicity of the address

[1] Ælfric makes a remark which is illustrative of a scene in the *Blickling Homilies.* "While the Body of Christ lay in the grave, His Godhead was in hell, and bound the ancient devil, and took from him Adam and Eve, and all those of their race that had been well-pleasing to God. Then the devil felt the hook that he had before eagerly swallowed."

given by St. Luke is quite spoilt in the *Blickling Homily* by unauthorised and unbecoming expressions. And again when her assumption into heaven is about to occur, the close of her earthly life gives occasion for a good deal of speechifying on the part of St. Peter and other Apostles. All this artificiality was strongly repudiated by the truthful Ælfric, and in the avoidance of such unsuitable additions to Scriptural stories he rose above his predecessors. It must be admitted that in the *Lives of the Saints* he did insert some mythical additions to Scriptural accounts. These, however, he no doubt took from the ancient writers from whom he compiled, for it was his constant habit to abridge rather than to add to the authorities that he used.

The *Blickling Homily* on our Lord's descent into hell runs as follows:—

"Dearest men, this paschal festival presents to us a manifest token of the eternal life, as we may now hear related, so that none may need doubt that the event shall happen at this present season, when the same Creator will sit upon His judgment seat, and before Him shall be present all angel-kind and man-kind, and also accursed spirits; and there shall be investigated each man's deeds. And he who is humble, and with all his mind mindful of Christ's passion and of His resurrection, shall receive a heavenly reward. And he who neglects to observe God's behests, or to bear at all in mind our Lord's meekness, shall hear a severe sentence

and afterwards shall dwell in eternal torments, of which there shall be never any end. Then is this time of all times, the highest and most sacred: and at this time we should have divine and worldly bliss, because for our example the Lord arose from the dead after His passion, after the bonds of His death, and after the bonds of hell's darkness; and He laid upon the prince of devils eternal torment and vengeance and delivered mankind, as the prophet David prophesied of this period thus saying, 'Our Lord delivered us' and hath fulfilled what He had long threatened to the accursed spirits; and He hath made known to men at this present time all the things that were ever before prophesied by the prophets concerning His passion, His resurrection, and His harrowing of hell, and concerning His many miracles which were previously foretold. All that He hath fulfilled. Let us now hear and consider what He did, and by what means He made us free. He was not by any necessity compelled, but of His own will descended upon earth, and here suffered many afflictions and sorrows from the Jews and the wicked scribes; and then at last He permitted His body to be fastened with nails to the cross, and suffered death for us, because He would give us everlasting life; and then He sent His glorious spirit into the abyss of hell and there bound and humbled the prince of all darkness and of eternal death, and exceedingly troubled all his confederates, and brake in pieces hell-gates and their iron bolts, and from thence brought out all His elect; and He overcame the darkness of the

devil with His shining light. They were then exceedingly terrified and exclaimed, thus saying, 'Whence is this man thus strong, thus glorious, and thus terrible? The world was long previously subject to us, and death yielded to us much tribute. Never before has it happened to us that death has thus been put an end to, nor ever before has such terror befallen to us and to hell. O, now, who is this that fearless enters our confines, and not only does not dread punishment from us but will also release others from our bonds? Think we this be he whom we thought that through his death all the world should be subject to us? Hearest thou, our chief? This is the same for whose death thou hast long striven. And thou didst promise us with thy support much spoil at last. But how wilt thou now do with respect to him? And how mayest thou now overthrow him? Now he hath put all thy darkness to flight through his brightness, and hath broken all thy prison in pieces; and all those whom thou previously heldest captive he hath set free, and their life he hath turned to joy; and those now mock us who previously sighed under our bonds. Why bringest thou hither this man who by his coming hath turned all his chosen to to their ancient bliss? Though they were previously despairing of eternal life, they are now very joyful. There is now no weeping nor lamentation heard here, as was previously wont to be, in this place of torment. Oh, now, our chief, those riches that thou obtainedst in the beginning through the boldness and the disobedience of the first man and

the forfeiture of Paradise—all those he hath now seized, and through Christ's cross all thy bliss is turned to grief. When thou didst wish what thou didst know (should come to pass), that Christ should be crucified, thou didst not know how many troubles at his death should come upon us all. Thou wouldst ever defile him, in whom thou didst know there was no sin. Wherefore broughtest thou hither this free and innocent man? Now by his coming hither, he hath condemned and humiliated all the guilty.' Then immediately after, the impious voice of hell's host was heard, and their lamentation. Then it happened without any delay, on account of the coming of the Lord's kingdom, that all the iron bolts of hell's locks were broken; and forthwith the innumerable host of sanctified souls who previously were held captive did obeisance to the Saviour, and with weeping supplication prayed to Him, thus saying: 'Thou didst come to us as the redeemer of the world. Thou didst come to us—the hope of heaven and earth's hosts, and also our hope—for of yore the prophets foretold Thy coming—and we hoped and trusted in Thy coming hither: Thou didst give on earth forgiveness of sins to men. Set us free from hell's power and from hell's bondage. Now, since for us Thou didst descend into hell's abyss, leave us not now to dwell in torment when Thou turnest to Thy kingdom on high. Thou didst set the sign of Thy glory in the world, set now the token of Thy glory in hell.' Without delay this prayer was at once heard, and immediately the innumerable

host of holy souls, at the Lord's bidding, were raised out of the fiery sulphur, and He felled down the old devil and cast him bound into hell's abyss. Then the holy souls with ineffable joy cried to the Lord, thus saying: 'Ascend up now, Lord Jesus Christ, now Thou hast spoiled hell, and hast bound the prince of death in these torments; manifest now bliss to the world, that all Thy chosen may rejoice and trust in Thy ascension.' Adam and Eve, as yet, had not been set free, but were held in bonds; Adam then with weeping and with piteous voice cried to the Lord, and said, 'Have mercy upon me, O Lord, have mercy upon me, for Thy great mercy, and blot out my unrighteousness, because I have sinned against Thee alone and have done great sin before Thee. I have erred as the sheep that perishes. Visit now Thy servant, O Lord, for Thy hands have made and fashioned me; leave not my soul with hell's hosts, but show Thy mercy upon me, and bring me out of these bonds, and from this prison-house, and from the shadow of death.' The Lord Jesus then had mercy upon Adam, and at once his bonds were unloosed, and having embraced the Saviour's knees, he said, 'My soul shall bless the Lord, and all that is within me shall bless His holy name. Thou Thyself didst heal my infirmities, and didst deliver my soul from eternal perdition, and didst satisfy my longing with good things.' Eve as yet continued in bonds and in weeping. She said, 'Thou, O Lord, art just and Thy judgments are right, therefore deservedly I suffer these torments. In Paradise I was in honour

and I did not perceive it; I became perverse and like to foolish brutes. But Thou, Lord, shield of my youth and of me, be not mindful of my folly, nor turn from me Thy presence nor Thy mercy, and turn not in anger from Thy servant. Hear, O gracious God, my voice with which I, poor one, cry unto Thee, for my life and my years have been consumed in sorrow and lamentation. Thou knowest my fashioning, that I am dust and ashes, if Thou beholdest my unrighteousness. I entreat Thee, now, Lord, for the sake of Thy servant Saint Mary, whom Thou hast honoured with heavenly glory. Thou didst fill her womb for nine months with the prize of all the world. Thou knowest that Thou, O Lord, didst spring from my daughter, and that her flesh is of my flesh, and her bone of my bones. Have mercy now upon me, Lord, for the honour of her glory. My Creator have mercy upon me, most wretched of all women, and pity me and deliver me from the bonds of this death.' The Lord Jesus then had mercy upon Eve, and immediately her bonds were unloosed. She then cried out, thus saying, 'Let Thy name, O Lord, be blessed in the world, because Thy mercy is great towards me. Now thou hast delivered my soul from the nether hell.' Then the patriarch Abraham, with all the holy souls that from the beginning of the world had been held captive, cried out with joyful voice and said, 'We confess Thee, O Lord, and we praise Thee because Thou hast delivered us from the author of death, and hast made us joyful through Thy coming.' Then the Lord, with the

spoil that He had taken from hell, immediately went living from the tomb, raised by His own power, and afterwards clothed Himself with His unspotted body, and showed Himself to His followers, because He wished to put away every doubt from their hearts. And He also showed the wounds and the scars of the nails to unbelieving men, because He would not that any should be distrustful of His resurrection. And afterwards in the sight of many men He ascended into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God the Father; from whence He was never absent by reason of His divine nature, but was ever there established."

Ten Brink, quoted by Wülker,[1] p. 485, remarks as to the *Blickling Homilies*—

"The Homilist often speaks in the tones of a preacher of repentance who proclaims the end of all things to be near at hand. His theological learning is not great, and his matter is often confused, though he is well acquainted with the legends of the saints. He often draws from apocryphal sources, such as the Vision of Paul, and the Gospel of Nicodemus. He seems to attach more importance to impressive presentation of the scenes that he chooses, than to careful historical accuracy, and literal faithfulness to the Bible. His language contains many ancient elements. His representations are vivid, and pervaded with a certain spiritual fervour and often they are very effective."

[1] *Grundriss zur Geschichte der Angelsächsischen Litteratur.*

Archbishop Wulfstan, of York, for whom Ælfric had written a pastoral charge, was also an author of Homilies. Professor Earle points out that the *Blickling Homilies*, with those of Ælfric and Wulfstan, represent the Anglo-Saxon preaching for nearly one hundred and fifty years. The *Homilies of Wulfstan* have been edited by Professor Napier (Berlin, 1883). There is considerable doubt as to which of them are genuine, but the most remarkable, and certainly authentic, sermon is on the horrors of the Danish invasions, written in or near to the year of the murder of Archbishop Ælfeah at Canterbury. "The vices, evil deeds, and cowardice of the English are scourged with a heavy hand; the English are likened to the Britons whom they have turned out, and are threatened with the same fate." The Archbishop's passionate patriotism breaks forth in the burning words with which he describes the desolation and demoralization of England. "The people are scattered like frightened sheep before the onset of the heathen, without a single leader to rally them to resistance. Villages are destroyed by fire, the new minsters are stripped of their holy things; father is turned against son, and brother against brother; even the ancient bond of thane and thrall becomes loosened." After denunciations like those of a Hebrew prophet, ascribing these evils to the visitation of God on the sins of the people, the preacher ends with a gentler note.

"Let us creep to Christ," says the preacher, "and call upon Him unceasingly with trembling hearts, and deserve His mercy; let us love God and His laws, and faithfully perform what our sponsors promised for us at our baptism. Let us order rightly our words and deeds, and keep faith with one another without guile, and frequently think upon the great judgement that awaits us all; and protect ourselves against the flaming fire of hell; and let us earn for ourselves the glory and the joy which God has prepared for those who do His will on earth. So God help us.[1] Amen."

[1] *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. i. p. 130.

CHAPTER III

ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE: DANISH WARS

It is very desirable to gather from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle what the state of the country was while Ælfric was quietly working in his monastery and animating his countrymen to piety and energy by his writings. With a king, Ethelred the Unready,[1] who was of no use as a leader, and who did not even behave well to his own subjects, the English were under great discouragement. "Deliver not the tasks of might to weakness," says Tennyson; and if ever in our history they were so given over, it was in the time of Ethelred. His weakness was infectious; *his subjects were unwilling to defend their country.* The English were no longer the warriors they had been under Alfred, and hardly anywhere, except in London, did they hold out successfully against the Danes. Even there they eventually made terms. The Chronicle frankly acknowledges and laments bitterly their unwillingness to fight, and their useless payment of thousands of pounds

[1] The "Unready" was not used in our sense. It meant "redeless," *i.e.* without counsel. Yet he was also unready in our sense.

to buy off their enemies, who took the money and then raided as much as ever. Some instances of these miseries from the pages of the Chronicle will give an idea of the situation.

We may begin by quoting the notice of the death of Bishop Æthelwold. "This year (A.D. 984) died the benevolent Bishop of Winchester, Æthelwold, 'Father of monks.'" Then (A.D. 986), the unnatural conduct of the King is referred to: "This year the King laid waste the bishopric of Rochester. A.D. 988.—This year departed the holy Archbishop Dunstan, and passed to the heavenly life, and Bishop Ethelgar succeeded after him, to the archbishopric, and little while after that he lived, but one year and three months. A.D. 990.—This year Sigeric was consecrated archbishop, and afterwards went to Rome for his pall. A.D. 991.—In that year it was decreed that tribute, for the first time, should be given to the Danish men, on account of the great terror which they caused by the sea-coast, that was at first ten thousand pounds; this counsel was first given by Archbishop Sigeric." A.D. 992.—One or two gleams of success are now recorded. A traitor, who frequently betrayed the English cause to the enemy, earldorman Ælfric, got the worst of it. The ships from East Anglia, and from London met the army, and there they made great slaughter of them, and took the ship, all armed and equipped, in which the earldorman was.

A.D. 993. The battle at Maldon. A.D. 994. When the enemy "attacked London, on the nativity of St. Mary (Sept. 8) and continued fighting stoutly against the city, and would have set fire to it, they there sustained more harm and evil than they ever supposed any citizens would be able to do unto them. For the holy Mother of God on that day showed her mercy to the citizens and delivered them from their foes. Then they went thence, and wrought the utmost evil that ever any army could do, by burning and plundering, and by manslaying, both by the sea-coast, and among the East Saxons, and in the land of Kent, in Sussex, and in Hampshire. Then the King and his Witan decreed that they should be sent to, and promised tribute and food, on condition that they should cease from their plundering; which terms they accepted." Usually this compact was not observed by the enemy, but the Chronicle tells us that one of their leaders named Anlaf had become a Christian, and "the King received him at the bishop's hands, and royally gifted him. And Anlaf made a covenant with him that he would never come with hostility to the English nation again, and he kept his word."

We may note that the Chronicle tells us, under A.D. 995, that in this year Ælfric, who is described as bishop of Wiltshire, was made archbishop. Here we have clear proof that he was not the same person as our Ælfric, for the latter is recorded to

have been abbot of Eynsham, a monastery which was founded between the years 1000 and 1005; that is, subsequent to the appointment of the other Ælfric as archbishop.

"A.D. 998. This year the army (this is the designation of the enemy) went up as far as they would into Dorset. And forces were gathered against them, but as soon as they should have joined battle, then was there ever, through some cause, flight begun, and in the end they ever had the victory."

"A.D. 999. This year the army again came about into Thames, and went then up along the Medway and to Rochester. And then the Kentish forces came there to meet them, and they there stoutly joined battle: but alas! they too quickly yielded and fled, for they had not the support which they should have had. And the Danish men had possession of the place of carnage, and then they took horse and rode wheresoever they themselves would, and full nigh all the West Kentish men they ruined and plundered. Then the King, with his Witan, decreed that with a ship force and also with a land force, they should be attacked. But when the ships were ready, then the miserable crew delayed from day to day, and distressed the poor people who lay in the ships; and ever as it should have been forwarder, so was it later from one time to another, and ever they let their enemies' forces increase, and ever the people retired from the sea, and they ever went forth after them. And then in

the end, these expeditions both by sea and land effected nothing, except the people's distress and waste of money, and the emboldening of their foes."

"In the year 1006 Archbishop Ælfric died; and after him Bishop Ælfeah succeeded to the archbishopric (Alphege) . . . When it became winter, then went the forces home, and the army then came, over St. Martin's mass (Nov. 11) to their place of security, the Isle of Wight, and procured themselves there from all parts that which they needed. And then, at midwinter, they went to their ready storing of provisions, throughout Hampshire into Berkshire, and to Reading; and they did their old wont, they lighted their war beacons as they went. Then went they to Wallingford, and that all burned, and were then one day in Cholsey; and they went then along Ascesdun to Cwichelms-hloew, and there abode, as a daring boast; for it had been often said, if they should reach Cwichelms-hloew, that they would never again go to the sea, then they went homewards another way. Then were forces assembled at Kennet, and they there joined battle; and they soon brought that band to flight, and afterwards carried their booty to the sea. But there might the Winchester men see an army daring and fearless, as they went by their gates towards the sea, and fetched themselves food and treasures from over fifty miles to the sea."

Our Chronicle goes on to describe how the King made a great effort to provide an adequate naval

force; but when the ships were all ready, there was desertion and treachery, and a storm dashed some of the ships to pieces. "Then was it as if it had been all hopeless; and the King went his way home, and the earldormen and the high Witan and thus lightly left the ships, and they let the whole nation's toil thus lightly pass away."

These passages may suffice to show the sad state of the English nation, the uselessness of their king, and the cruelty of the invaders, and may make us wonder the more that, at no great distance from some of these distressing scenes, Abbot Ælfric was sending forth writings which might animate his countrymen to braver resistance, and at the same time lead them to a Christian life, and to preparation for that wonderful spiritual and heavenly world, which is the sure and certain object of the Christian hope.

Ælfric was, as has been already stated, constantly pointing out to his countrymen the need of *military training for Home defence,* and encouraging them by examples of valour drawn from Scripture and from secular history. Their ill-success in the reign of Ethelred was largely due to the incompetence of the King, and to the extraordinary prevalence of traitors. Yet there is a further reason given by Professor Oman in the first volume of the *History of England* which he is now editing. He tells us that the only disciplined soldiers in the service of

the English kings were their house-carls, or body-guard, and the Territorial force or "fyrd" was neither trained nor properly armed, being mainly a multitude of farmers and labourers, provided at hazard with any available weapons. Hence the Saxons could only hope to overcome the Danes when they were assembled in very superior numbers. For the successes of the Danes were largely due to their being well provided with offensive and defensive armour, and to their being trained fighters. From these causes they had an organized superiority before a battle began, and we cannot be surprised that, when it was over, they so often "had possession of the place of carnage," as the Chronicle tells us.

Amid the sad decadence of the reign of Ethelred, two heroes stand out offering a noble contrast to the prevailing inefficiency and cowardice. These are Ælfeah, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Byrthnoth, the leader in the splendid fight of Maldon. The name Ælfeah, or St. Alphege, is rightly commemorated in the Calendar of our Prayer Book, and no more suitable name could be found in the present day when builders of a new Church are seeking for a patron saint.

The Earldorman Byrthnoth refused to pay tribute to the Danes, and fell in the battle of Maldon, where the Saxons showed something of their ancient valour, and gave the Danes severe "hand

play." A considerable fragment still exists of a spirited poem on this battle, which will be found in the *Analecta Anglo-Saxonica*, by Thorpe. The reader is referred to a vivid outline of these verses in the *Cambridge History of Literature*, vol. i. p. 144.

The following is the account of the martyrdom of Ælfeah in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle:—

"A.D. 1011. In this year between the nativity of St. Mary and St. Michael's Mass they besieged Canterbury, and got into it through treachery, because Ælmar[1] betrayed it, whose life the Archbishop Ælfeah had before saved. And there they took the Archbishop Ælfeah and Ælfweard the King's steward, and the Abbess Leofrune, and Bishop Godwin. And Abbot Ælmar they let go away . . . And they remained within the City afterwards as long as they would. And when they had thoroughly searched the city, then went they to their ships, and led the Archbishop with them

He was then captive
who erewhile was
the head of the English race
and of Christendom.
There might then be seen
misery, where men oft
erewhile had seen bliss,
in that hapless city,
whence to us came first
Christendom and bliss
for God, and for the world.

"And they kept the Archbishop with them until

[1] Florence of Worcester describes Ælmar as archdeacon.

the time came that they martyred him." This occurred in the year 1012, "for," the Chronicle continues, "in this year came Ædric the earldorman and all the chief witan, clergy, and laity of the English people to London before Easter . . . and they were there then so long as until all the tribute was paid, after Easter; that was eight and forty thousand pounds. Then on the Saturday (19th of April) was the army greatly excited against the bishop, because he would not promise them any money: but that he forbade that anything should be given for him. They had also drunk deeply, for wine had been brought there from the south. Then took they the bishop, led him to their husting on the eve of Sunday; . . . and there they then shamefully slaughtered him: they cast upon him bones and the horns of oxen, and then one of them struck him with an axe-iron on the head so that with the blow he sank down; and his holy blood fell on the earth, and his holy soul he sent forth to God's Kingdom. And on the morrow the body was carried to London and the bishops Ædnoth and Ælfun and the townsmen received it with all reverence, and buried it in St. Paul's minster; and there God now manifesteth the miraculous powers of the holy Martyr."[1]

We find that in 1013, "in the year after that in which the Archbishop Ælfeah was martyred, the

[1] In the *Dictionary of National Biography* it is stated that Thurkill, the leader of the Danes, hastened to the spot, and offered to give gold and silver, and all that he had, save his ship, if they would save the life of the Archbishop.

King appointed bishop Lyfing to be Archbishop at Canterbury." [1] This is an additional proof that our Ælfric could never have held this high office.

In concluding this short notice of the Danish invasion, I have obtained permission from the Editor of *Notes and Queries* to quote the following interesting particulars with reference to plants whose names were connected with these sanguinary contests by popular tradition. They show how deeply the cruelties of the Danes had been stored up in the folklore of the people.

"Danes'-Blood, a Flower (11 S. ii. 488). This is a local name in Hertfordshire and Essex applied to several plants which are supposed to owe their origin to the blood of slaughtered Danes. My first acquaintance with a plant of this denomination proved to be the Danewort or dwarf elder, which grew fairly freely in places by the side of the main road between Anstey and Barkway.

"Weever in his *Antient Funeral Monuments*, 1631, p. 707, referring to Bartlow, Essex, says :—

"'Danewort, which with bloud-red berries commeth up here plenteously, they still call by no other name than Danes-bloud, of the number of the Danes that were there slaine.'

"Camden in his *Britannia*, 1607, refers to the same plant as the wall-wort or dwarf elder. It should be noted that the elder-berries are not red, but a reddish-black, and yield a violet juice.

[1] The quotations from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* are taken from the translation by the Rev. J. Stevenson, Seeleys. 1853.

"The *Anemone pulsatilla* or pasque-flower, found in abundance near Ashwell, Herts, is also known locally as Danes'-blood. Mr. E. V. Methold in his *Notes on Stevenage, Herts*, remarks that in the hedges of the field known to this day as 'Danes' Blood Field' there grows a plant called 'monkshood,' in which, during the spring, the sap turns to a reddish colour. W. B. Gerish.

"In *Tongues in Trees*, a work on plantlore published by George Allen in 1891, I read at p. 48:—

"'The pasque-flower, *Anemone pulsatilla*, a native in the fields near Royston, is there supposed to have grown from the blood of Danes slain in battle. The same idea attaches in Wiltshire to the Danewort or dwarf elder, *Sambucus Ebulus*; though at the High Cross on Watling Street near Leicester it is recorded as having been planted by the Romans as a preservative against dropsy.' W. T.

"According to Folkard, the plant to which this legend properly belongs is the dwarf elder. He quotes Aubrey in support, who locates the legend at Slaughterford in Wilts.

"Friend says the name is given in various places to the rose, anemone, thistle, Adonis, and other flowers too numerous to mention. C. C. B.

"Britten and Holland, *Plant Names*, 1886, p. 142, give three species: 1. *Sambucus Ebulus*, L., Cambs, Wilts; 2. *Anemone pulsatilla*, L., Cambs, N. Essex, Norf. 3. *Campanula glomerata*, L., Cambs. S. L. Petty.

Ulverston.

"It is not only the clustered bell-flower (*Cam-*

panula glomerata) that is known as Danes'-blood. The dwarf elder, *Sambucus Ebulus*, is also known both as Danes'-blood and Danes'-wort (Berkshire), and, as may be seen in Salmon's *London Dispensatory*, was a common remedy for various ills. The popular belief that the flower sprang originally from the blood of the Danes which stained the ancient battle-fields is still common in Wiltshire, North Hertfordshire, Hampshire, Cumberland, North Essex, and Norfolk. In Northamptonshire the plant is known also as Dane-weed, and Defoe, in his *Tour through Great Britain*, speaks of his going a little out of the road from Daventry to see a great camp called Barrow Hill, and adds :—

"'They say this was a Danish camp, and everything hereabout is attributed to the Danes, because of the neighbouring Daventry, which they suppose to be built by them. The road hereabouts, too, being overgrown with Dane-weed, they fancy it sprang from the blood of Danes slain in battle ; and that, if upon a certain day in the year you cut it, it bleeds.'—Vol. ii. p. 362.

There is a full account of the tradition in *The Gardeners' Chronicle*, 1875, p. 515. See also Prior and Britten, *s.vv.* Danewort, Daneweed ; Aubrey's *Natural History of Wilts*, p. 50 ; "Natural History and Antiquities of Surrey," iv. 217, cited in *Flowers and Flower Lore*, by the Rev. Hilderie Friend, 1884. J. Holden MacMichael.

4 Hurlingham Court, S.W."

Æthelred began his reign in the year 979, and died in 1016.

The following sums were paid to the Danes, who took the indemnity, and ravaged all the same, in his reign. These payments were begun by the advice of Archbishop Sigeric:—

A.D.	991	£10,000
„	994	16,000
„	1002	24,000
„	1007	36,000
„	1014	21,000

When we consider the different value of money in those days, it seems wonderful that England should have been able to raise so much for payment of "Danegelt."

Old Fuller[1] remarks on this: "King Æthelred hearkened to the persuasions of Siricius, Archbishop of Canterbury, and with ten thousand pounds purchased a present peace with the Danes. Indeed, it was conformable to the calling of a Churchman to procure peace, having not only Scripture precepts therein, 'Seek peace, and pursue it,' but also precedents for the same, when gracious Hezekiah with a present persuaded Sennacherib to desist from invading him. However, this Archbishop generally suffered in his reputation, condemned of all, for counselling of what was, *first, dishonourable,* that an entire nation

[1] Fuller's *Church History of Britain*, book ii. p. 136, printed for John Williams at the sign of the Crown in St. Paul's Churchyard, *anno* 1656.

being at home in their own land should purchase a peace from foreigners, fewer in number, and fetching their recruits and warlike provisions from a far country; let them be paid in due coin; not silver, but steel. *Secondly*, *unprofitable*; if once the Danes got the trick to make the English bleed money, they would never leave them till they had sucked out their heart-blood and exhausted the whole treasure of the land."

CHAPTER IV

LIFE OF ÆLFRIC

ÆLFRIC was born about the year 955, and was educated as a youth in the monastery of Winchester under Æthelwold, at one time Abbot of Abingdon, afterwards Bishop of Winchester. The Bishop was also Abbot of the "Old" monastery and had introduced the Benedictine rule. Æthelwold, whose life was afterwards written by Ælfric, maintained a strong hand and exact discipline, but he had a kindly and winning manner with children and youths, and enjoyed teaching them. He explained the Latin books to them in English, and "exhorted them with pleasant words to better things." His pupil Ælfric, shows in his "colloquy" with boys a most kindly spirit, and it cannot be doubted that the lesson of Æthelwold's geniality had sunk into his mind.[1] It is evident from that colloquy, as

[1] Dean Hook has an amusing criticism on this record. *Lives of the Archbishops*, vol. i. p. 441: "Though a popular master, we may doubt whether he was a good one, for one of his practices was to turn Latin books for them into English. We have heard of the use of cribs, but this is perhaps the only instance of their being provided by the master." On this we may remark that in the

well as from what we read of Winchester, that the life of boys in the school of a monastery was by no means unhappy or depressing, and, in contrast to what we have often found in recent days in our own public schools, it appears that they were well fed. Nor were the monks without interest in life. The books copied in the Scriptorium of the monastery were beautifully illuminated, and when Æthelwold put up a new organ, a music-book was compiled which still exists, and which gives the cadences and tones used in the services as conducted in the tenth century.

Ælfric's writings may best be studied as those that he wrote while a simple monk, and those composed when he had become an abbot. There is clear evidence that he did not attain this dignity till the year 1005.

From Winchester Ælfric went to Cernel in Dorsetshire, now called Cerne Abbas, where was a monastery to which King Æthelred had given a charter.

He was sent thither by Ælfeah,[1] or Alphege, Bishop of Winchester, at the request of Æthelmær,

early ages books were costly, and probably Æthelwold construed the Latin sentences to the boys, and then made the boys repeat the Latin and the English to him. This was not a bad method.

[1] The same prelate that was murdered when archbishop. He was patriotic, for it is related that he held a council at Enham, to make provision against the sale of slaves, etc., and the meeting ended with a solemn pledge of loyalty, and with suggestions for the organization of a fleet, and a national land force, and council.

a distinguished person and large landowner in the neighbourhood, who had refounded the monastery, and wished that the monks should be guided in the study and observance of the Benedictine rule. Ælfric appears to have stayed at Cernel from 987 to 989, and to have then returned to Winchester. It has been supposed by some that he was Abbot of Cernel, but this is an error, for he never designates himself as Abbot in any of his writings till he was settled at Eynsham, by the desire of Æthelmær, who became a firm friend to him. At Cernel he formed the idea of writing his homilies for the benefit of the people, but there can be little doubt that they were mainly composed after his return to Winchester. He himself tells us his motive: "The people have no books that teach in their own language the truth of God, save those that King Alfred translated. There are indeed many English books that teach error, and the unlearned in their simplicity esteem them great wisdom." Moreover, the clergy had little power of preaching, and Ælfric desired to supply them with English sermons that they might read in Church, founded on the best teachers of old days. Of these he mentions, amongst others not named, six—Augustine, Jerome, Gregory, Bede, Smaragdus, and Haymo.[1]

[1] Smaragdus was Abbot of St. Mihiel, a monastery in the diocese of Verdun, in the eighth century. He wrote commentaries on the Scriptures, and sermons. Haymo was Bishop of Halberstadt about the middle of the ninth century. He composed commentaries from

He aimed at making their teaching suitable for ordinary and uneducated hearers, in plain language, not by mere translation, but by rendering the sense. He puts his authors forward as the important persons, and keeps himself in the background, but at the same time he moulds the substance of their writing into the form most suitable for his English hearers, often adding racy and impressive applications of his own.

The *Catholic Homilies* were in two volumes; each intended to afford sermons for a year, they were dedicated to Sigeric, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 990, and died in 995.

The next literary effort to which Ælfric devoted himself was the composition of a Latin Grammar in the English language, to which he added a glossary of words in common use. One might have imagined that grammars for teaching boys Latin would always be brought out in the native language of the scholars, whatever that might be, with only the necessary words and quotations in Latin. But the earliest Latin Grammars had been written in Italy, in days when Latin was either the vernacular tongue or still well known and used. So extraordinary has been the conservatism of educationists that because Roman boys had their grammars in Latin, the custom was maintained for

the works of the Fathers on almost every part of Scripture. There was also a Haymo of Canterbury who wrote commentaries.

ages. Only quite recently have English public schoolboys been freed from the needless difficulty of learning the elements of Latin through rules given in that language only. Already, in the years so distant from our own, about 995, Ælfric's common sense led him to compose for Saxon boys a grammar in their own language. Knowing that this departure from the prevailing custom would expose his work to criticism, he thought it prudent to apologize in his Preface.

Translation of Part of the Latin Preface to Ælfric's *Grammar and Glossary*

(*It was from this work that Ælfric was called "Grammaticus"*)

"I, Ælfric, as one of slight wisdom, have chosen these extracts from the smaller and from the larger work of Priscian,[1] and have translated them into your own language for you little boys of tender years; that after having read through the eight parts of speech of Donatus,[2] you may be able to receive both languages into your tender minds, while you progress towards higher studies. I know that many persons will blame me for having been

[1] Priscian was born towards the end of the fourth century at Cæsarea. He held a famous school at Constantinople. He wrote a grammar in eighteen books which was in use until the Renaissance. It was first printed in Venice in 1470. There is a modern edition. Leipzig, 1819–20.

[2] Donatus was a Roman grammarian of the fourth century. The title of his book was *Donatus de octo partibus orationis*. It was sometimes called *Donatus pro puerulis*—"for little boys."

willing to occupy myself with such work as the turning of grammar into the English language. But if my method displeases anyone, let him criticise my translation just as he likes; we are content to follow the teaching that we have received in the school of Æthelwold, the venerable prelate who inspired many with goodness," etc. etc.

The composition at this period of the *Grammar and Glossary* strengthens the idea that Skeat is right in his assumption of Ælfric having returned from Cernel to reside at Winchester. A new generation of boys would now be studying in the monastic school endeared to him by the instructions of Æthelwold. In the days of that friendly bishop and teacher, boys had received much help in renderings of Latin into English, and Ælfric was following the same kindly view of education when he wrote a *Grammar and Glossary* on a helpful plan.

Yet while he valued learning, and wished to smooth the path of young scholars, the claims of religion were always supreme with Ælfric, and he returned not long after to the task of editing some more sermons. These are known as *Lives of Saints*, and whereas the former Homilies were about "those Saints whom the English nation honoureth with festivals," Ælfric tells us that these others relate to those "whom monks in their offices honour amongst themselves." "The book, however," he says in his

Preface, "is intended for as many as are pleased to study this work either by reading or hearing it read"; adding, "I think that those things which I am now going to write will not at all offend the hearers, but will rather refresh by their exhortations such as are slothful in the faith, since the Passions of the Martyrs greatly revive a failing faith." He goes on to say that he does not profess "to give word for word," but rather exact sense for sense, by such simple and obvious language as may profit them that hear it. Moreover, he abridges the longer narratives of the Passions, because "we know that brevity does not always deprave speech, but oftentimes makes it more charming." Again he realises that disapproval may follow on translations from the Latin into the common tongue, and he remarks: "Let it not be considered a fault in me that I turn sacred narrative into our own language, since the request of many of the faithful shall clear me in this matter; particularly that of the governor Æthelweard, and of my friend Æthelmær, who most highly honour my translations by their perusal of them," etc. These words are taken from his Latin Preface. He then addresses, in a few lines of Anglo-Saxon, these two distinguished laymen as follows:—

"Ælfric humbly greeteth earldorman Æthelweard, and I tell thee, beloved, that I have now collected

in this book such Passions of the Saints as I have had leisure to translate into English, because that thou, beloved, and Æthelmær earnestly prayed me for such writings, and received them at my hands, for the confirmation of your faith by means of this history, which ye never had in your language before," etc. etc.[1]

These *Lives of the Saints* were probably written about 996 or 997.

It was about the year 997 that Ælfric translated some portions of the Pentateuch and of Joshua for Æthelweard, stating in his Preface that "Ælfric the monk humbly greeteth Æthelweard the earl-dorman. Thou didst pray me, friend, to translate the Book of Genesis from Latin into English. Then it seemed to me wearisome to accede to thee in this matter, and thou saidst that I need only translate the book as far as to the account of Isaac, son of Abraham, because some other man had already translated the book for thee from that point to the end." It is therefore probable that Ælfric accordingly incorporated an already existing work in the further portions. In connection with Ælfric having made translations of books of the Bible for laymen, it has been well remarked that he had evidently no aversion such as prevailed among the

[1] This Æthelweard is supposed to be identical with the Æthelweard who wrote a Latin Chronicle, which still exists, but the sentence above quoted does not look as if our Æthelweard understood Latin. See Appendix A.

clergy later on, to the Scriptures being read by the laity; and he desired only to suppress those parts of the Old Testament which might perplex them by encouraging polygamy, or which were less profitable as regards their practical lessons.

After these translations Ælfric brought out an epitome of the Book of Job, and added renderings of Esther and Judith. One of his last works while still "a humble brother" was a set of directions or Canons for the Clergy, written for the use of Bishop Wulfsige.

The pastoral letter to clergy which Wulfsige, Bishop of Sherborne, asked Ælfric to write for his use was prefaced by a short personal address, containing a very plain-spoken warning:—

"We have not dared to write anything about the episcopal office, because it belongs to you to know in what way you should be an example to all by the best practices, even as it is yours to know how to exhort your subordinates with constant admonitions to seek the salvation which is in Jesus Christ. I say, nevertheless, those things which you ought again and again to say to your clergy, and in regard to which you should show their remissness, since through their frowardness the canon law, and the religion and doctrine of Holy Church are destroyed. Free your mind, therefore, and tell them what ought to be regarded by the priests and ministers of Christ, lest you yourself perish likewise, if you are accounted a dumb dog. We verily

have written this letter which follows in English, as if it were dictated by your own mouth, and you were speaking yourself to the clergy that are under you."

Two points deserve notice. He declares that the priest ought on Sundays and Mass days to tell the people the sense of the Gospel in English, and explain the Pater Noster and the Creed as often as possible. Also the "priest shall anoint the sick according to St. James' rule."

He was now on the verge of the year 1000, a period much dreaded throughout Western Christendom, many persons anticipating that this remarkable date would signalise the end of the world. But his faithful friend Æthelmær was planning fresh efforts for the good of the Church.

The monastery of Eynsham was refounded by Æthelmær and the Benedictine rule set up. The Charter of King Æthelred still exists, and contains the following passages. Ælfric was appointed abbot by Æthelmær in 1005.

"I, Æthelred, have caused to be committed to writing this record, that at the request of Æthelmær, a man most truly faithful and dear unto me, I give the most complete privileges to his monastery, dedicated to the Name of the Holy Saviour, and all His Saints, and established in the well-known spot called Egnesham by the inhabitants of that region. This monastery Æthelmær received from his son-

in-law, Æthelweard, by exchange.[1] Establishing there monks of the regular life, he acted as a father, and living in common with them, he has appointed during his life an abbot over the community of monks, so that in succession to him whom he has appointed abbot, the election of abbots in future should proceed according to the directions of the rule."

The Charter also contained the following remarkable words (the end of the world being anticipated):

"It especially behoves us, upon whom the ends of the ages are come, to examine with diligent care the needs of our souls, that we may know how and with what merits we may, in that world which is soon to appear, be victorious with Christ, for here we have no dwelling-place, but we seek one to come. Therefore, we with earthly riches have great need to try with all our powers to obtain that future world."

Among those who signed the Charter, besides Æthelweard and Æthelmær, were Wulfstan, Archbishop of York, and Ælfeah, Bishop of Winchester, who was afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.

Of the elevation of the humble and single-minded Ælfric to rule as abbot over a new monastic community, Skeat remarks that it caused a great

[1] Æthelmær is sometimes described as son of Æthelweard, here the latter appears as "gener," which means son-in-law, or brother-in-law. No doubt they were different persons. See Appendix A.

change in his life, as he passed from his well-known Wessex into fresh surroundings in Mercia. He adds as regards the difference in the Anglo-Saxon speech of these provinces, that

"this famous author, speaking the Wessex dialect in its most elegant and polished form, must now have had frequent intercourse with some peasant who could only address him in the comparatively rude dialect of Mercia. Great would have been the astonishment of the two interlocutors in such a conversation, if it could have been revealed to them that a time would come, when the Mercian dialect would be familiar all over the world, whilst the polished Wessex would be regarded as a comparatively negligible form of speech."

From this it appears that Skeat regards the Mercian, and not the Wessex, dialect as the prototype of modern English.[1] Besides this change in conversational intercourse, Eynsham would be to Ælfric a remote residence, as compared with the central life of the ancient Winchester. Nor would the nearness of Oxford offer any intellectual compensation, for that city was then quite a small place, of few houses, with no prominent building but the nunnery of St. Frideswide on the banks of the Thames. The idea of a foundation of a

[1] It would be interesting to compare the poems in the recent Dorset dialect, by Barnes, with the ancient speech of Wessex. *Poems of Rural Life, in the Dorset Dialect*, by W. Barnes. London: Kegan Paul. 1888.

University by King Alfred has long been discarded. There is no trace of a society of students in Oxford before the twelfth century. Moreover, the early Universities were not founded, they grew; they developed gradually out of guilds of scholars, and when firmly rooted, these societies obtained a charter from King or Pope. Ælfric, in leaving Winchester for the little village of Eynsham, was passing into the wilderness, though a green wilderness; but we cannot doubt that he soon made it to himself and his monks a centre of study. One of his first writings there was an edition of Æthelwold's Rules and Customs for Monks (*consuetudines monachorum*), and he followed that up by inditing a biography of his beloved and sainted teacher. This work is not later than the year 1006.

Among the most interesting features of Ælfric's career is the friendship that existed between himself and several prominent noblemen and thanes. Not long after his becoming Abbot of Eynsham we find him writing to a thane named Wulfgeat at Ylmandun. This is the modern Ilmington, about thirty miles from Eynsham, near Shipton-on-Stour. The letter has been printed by Assmann. The second part of the letter consists of a sermon or homily on Matt. v. 25. It looks as if, like so many of the Anglo-Saxons, Wulfgeat was too fond of his glass.

"Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou

art in the way with him." Ælfric explains the adversary as being the word of God, which is an opponent to men doing wrong. This teaching is from Augustine. Ælfric says:

"The adversary of the text is described as the word of God, which we ought to obey. The word will work in us like the healing power of a physician, like the instruction of a good teacher. The adversary is really thy friend. Thou lovest drunkenness. This our Saviour forbids. Deceive not thy neighbour, it were better that each should help the other. God's word forbids all sins in this life. This life is the path in which we are to agree with our adversary the word. After it there will be no way left us to correct our misdeeds. The word is to be our judge. The Saviour bids all who labour to come to Him. He did not command us to work in another world, nor to work great miracles, but to be gentle in life and meek in heart. We ought to teach the foolish and the careless, else God will require their souls at our hands. God grant us to tell you often of His holy love, and to you to turn the teaching into good works."

For another thane, named Sigward, of East Healas, now Asthall, about twelve miles from Eynsham, Ælfric wrote his *Introduction to the Old and New Testaments*, about the year 1008. He dedicates this by the words: "Ælfric, Abbot, sends friendly greeting to Sigward at East Healas."

The occasion of the writing is expressed in the following manner:

"I say to thee in truth that he is very wise who speaks by works. Thou didst very often ask me for English writings, and I did not consent quickly, until thou didst strive for it with works, when thou besoughtest me earnestly for the love of God, that I would speak with thee at home, at thine house, and then when I was with thee, thou lamentedst much because thou couldst not obtain my writings."

This work on the Old and New Testaments is a historical outline of the Bible. Its sources appear to be Augustine and Isidore's *In libros vet; ac novi testamenti, prooemia.*

He also blames Sigward for encouraging drinking.

"When I was with thee, thou wouldest fain have persuaded me to drink for pleasure more than was my custom. But know, beloved, that he who forceth another to drink more than he can bear, shall answer for both, if any harm come thereof. Our Saviour Christ in His holy Gospel hath forbidden drunkenness to all who believe in Him. Suffer then every man that will, to obey the ordinance of Christ. And the holy teachers since the Saviour have also proscribed this evil habit, by their doctrine, and have taught that men should drink so as to do no injury to themselves, for drunkenness surely destroyeth both a man's soul and his health."

The skill of Ælfric in writing admonitory appeals was made use of about this time by Wulfstan, Archbishop of York and Bishop of Worcester. For him a pastoral letter was written; and a second also exists, but the authenticity of this letter has been doubted. These addresses to the clergy, written as before stated for Bishop Wulfsige, and now for Archbishop Wulfstan, we should in the present day call Episcopal charges. And if Ælfric had not found his vocation so fully in writing, he might well have himself filled the Episcopal office. He has indeed been often identified with Ælfric, Archbishop of Canterbury, but this view is quite a mistake.

Wulfstan was Archbishop of York from 1002 to 1023, and Bishop of Worcester from 1002 to 1016. It has been already remarked that he himself published some homilies of an earnest and, indeed, fiery kind, blaming the English for their slackness.

Ælfric's style was the expression and result of his character. It is evident that he was not thinking of himself when he wrote, he was not aiming at fine compositions that might advance his literary reputation. It is clear that he had two main thoughts in his mind, how he could most suitably adapt himself to his hearers or readers, and how best to represent the ideas of his authors in the language of the people. Humbly as he

speaks of himself, he was far from being a mere translator; while faithful to the sense, his sentences were cast in the mould of his own keen and earnest mind, and many racy comments and additions were added by himself to impress the lessons that he was conveying. He had a wholesome horror of being prolix, and abridges freely to sharpen the matter in hand. Hence simplicity, clearness, and vigour are his characteristics. He valued his learning not so much for his own personal satisfaction as for the benefit of the clergy and laity to whom he could make it useful in a popular form.

As regards his literary power, one of his modern critics remarks:

"He is incontestably a master in the portrayal of Biblical story, understanding well how to weave into the narrative his own practical application and comments. Avoiding as far as possible superstitious additions to the legends of the earlier Church, he places before his readers the more important and primary truths. He sets forth with vital freshness and sincerity the mystery of redemption and the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit for man."

His books became the most acceptable means of instruction for the clergy, and his homilies continued to be copied long after the Norman Conquest.

The quiet perseverance with which he went on

writing while the invasions of the Danes, which he animated his countrymen to resist, were devastating the land, is most remarkable. A recent writer (C. L. W.)[1] observes:—

"The contrast of unrest and terror outside the monastery, with the calm, steady purpose, and attention to everyday duties within, is shown in the writings which Ælfric produced at this time, still mindful of the spiritual needs of the people, when outward circumstances were as disheartening as possible."

Was our Ælfric ever Archbishop of Canterbury? Several English authors have assumed that he was identical with the Ælfric who held that high office. But the name Ælfric was a very common one, and the learned German writer, Dietrich, proved conclusively, as far back as the year 1855, that this was impossible. Skeat, who approves of Dietrich's arguments, stated the same view in 1900. Mr. Cockayne is quoted by Skeat as having independently arrived at the same conclusion.

In the year 995 Archbishop Sigeric, to whom Ælfric dedicated his Homilies, died, and the Saxon Chronicle informs us that Ælfric, "Bishop of Wiltshire," was chosen as his successor. He was archbishop until 1006, according to four MSS. of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, one placing his death

[1] Dr. Caroline Louisa White, in *Yale Studies in English*.

in 1005. Florence of Worcester accepts the date 1006. He was succeeded by Ælfeah, or Alphege. The monastery of Eynsham was refounded, and received a charter from the King in 1005, and at that date Ælfric became its abbot and resided there, instructing the monks in the Benedictine rule. It is evident from Ælfric's writings that he had not been an abbot before. He always styles himself a simple monk, *humilis frater*, previous to his appointment to Eynsham, and afterwards *Ælfricus Abbas*.

Moreover, he was never mentioned by those who had known him personally, or by those subsequently copying his works, as holding any higher title than that of abbot. His disciple, Ælfric Bata, in re-editing his *Colloquy*, remarks that "Ælfric, Abbot, put together this composition formerly (*olim*), in the Latin speech, who was my teacher, and I have to make additions thereto." If his old master had been living at the time, Bata would not have added any words of his own, as he would have left it to him to enlarge it if he thought fit, and the word *olim* confirms the view that Ælfric was then dead. And if he had ever held any higher title than that of abbot, he must have given it to him.

Was he Archbishop of York? He has been identified with an Ælfric who held that position, from 1023 to 1051. Not only are the dates against this idea, but the characters of the two men were entirely opposed. Ælfric of York was a

person of violent character, and it was by his advice that Hardicanute cut off the head from the corpse of his brother Harold and threw it into the Thames. He also incited the same king to plunder the city of Worcester, of which the Bishopric was at that period usually held with the Archbishopric of York. From these facts it is quite certain that our Ælfric was Abbot of Eynsham and nothing more. Dates are stubborn things, and they prove it. Yet, besides these facts, we may notice that Ælfric was devoted to what he felt to be his own special vocation. He had fitted himself to the task of making known to the Anglo-Saxon thanes and the humbler classes, in their own language, the truths of the Faith, drawing out these from the Scriptures, and the Fathers, and native authors, such as Bede, who wrote in Latin. He was filled with the desire to promote vital religion among his countrymen by the sermons, and translations, and hortatory writings that he supplied to them. In fact, he played the part, so far as his work could reach, of a Christian Knowledge Society for the people at large. Had he sought promotion to the episcopacy, or accepted it, if offered, he would have been immersed in official business, and the exercise of his special gifts must have ceased. He had the wisdom to know what he was suited to do, and he was faithful to his task. There runs through all his writings a simplicity of aim, which shows how

entirely bent he was on the great object of his life, the extension of practical piety, and its encouragement both among monks and laymen.

The date of Ælfric's death is uncertain; it was probably about the year 1025. It is stated in the *Dictionary of National Biography* that his name appears in witnessing a will in 1020.

In a spiritual point of view the greatest advantage in the study of such writers as Bede and Ælfric lies in the opportunity of seeing what effects could be produced in a rude and troubled age by the religion of Christ and the Grace of the Divine Spirit, and to what a height of spirituality and breadth of good works such men could even then attain. It may well occasion self-questioning to us, the students of such history, whether we, with all the immense advantages of the present time, have attained in any degree to the simple inward holiness and outward good works which characterised some of our own English ancestors in the faith.

CHAPTER V

SOME DOCTRINES OF THE ANGLO-SAXON CHURCH

The question of the doctrines of the Anglo-Saxon Church has been exhaustively treated by Dietrich, and it must be evident to any one who studies them with the simple desire to find out what they were, rather than what he would like them to be, that they are those of the Roman Church of *that age*, and this has not been adequately acknowledged by Anglican writers. Here, then, the Romans score, as against writers who seek for Protestant doctrine. But, on the other hand, it is evident that a considerable number of superstitions have been added by the mediæval church and the Papacy since that period. Among these we reckon the doctrine of transubstantiation; which, as our Article has it, "overthroweth the nature of a sacrament"; the mutilation of the Holy Communion by the withdrawal of the cup from the laity,[1] and the asser-

[1] A kindly High Churchman refers to this as follows: "Denial of the Cup has been one of the most grievous sins of Rome. And we may pardon many faults of the Reformers for restoring the Cup to lay people, and ending the abuse of a mutilated Sacrament" (*Addresses of the late Archdeacon Bourke*). Oxford: Mowbrays, 1911.

tion that Peter is the Rock on which the Church is to be built. None of these errors find a place in the Catholic faith of the Saxon Church. We will now pass some of these doctrines in review.

Anglo-Saxon Doctrine as to the Virgin Mary and the Saints

The teaching of Ælfric about the Virgin Mary was that of the Church of his day, but he protested against the introduction of new superstitions about her which some persons indulged in. She had often been spoken of as "the Mother of God"—so, for example, we have already seen in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, as to an attack on London that occurred A.D. 994, it is said that the "holy Mother of God on that day showed her mercy to the citizens, and delivered them from their foes," and Ælfric also uses this expression, and approves it; though to us it cannot seem otherwise than distressing.

Her intercession is sought—Homily of Ælfric on the Festival of the Annunciation—(Thorpe, *Catholic Homilies*, vol. i. p. 205):—

"Let us pray the blessed and happy Virgin Mary, that she intercede for us to her own Son and Creator, Jesus Christ, Who governs all things, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever to Eternity. Amen."

Also of the comfort derived from Mary (*Homilies*, Thorpe, vol. i. p. 449): "Verily, Mary is the

greatest comfort and support of Christian men, which is very often manifested, as we read in books." There seems some confusion of thought to have existed in those days, between the doctrine, clearly held, that the prayers of Mary and the Saints should be asked for, that they might intercede with God for us, and the statement that the Virgin Mary could herself be a help and support. It is, however, certain that the Anglo-Saxon doctrine made a decided distinction between the worship and adoration due to God only, one God in Three Persons, and the requests addressed to Mary and the Saints for their intercession and succour.

At the same time Ælfric discountenances any newly introduced superstitions. At first he was not inclined to provide a homily for the birthday of the Virgin Mary. When he decided to do so, he says :—

"We will not give the false story which heretics have told of Mary's birth, for wise teachers have forbidden it.[1] Her holy Father was named Joachim, and her mother Anna. They lived in honourable marriage under Moses' law. This day is sacred to the honour of Mary, throughout all Christendom. We observe the birthdays of none other in our Church, save of Christ, of His pure Mother, and of St. John, who baptized Him."

In the Homily of the festival of the Assumption of the Virgin, she is designated as "a heavenly

[1] He denied the "immaculate conception" of the Virgin Mary.

Queen," and all the hosts of heaven are described as welcoming her.

In another homily on the same festival, Ælfric observes :—

"What more shall we say to you of this feast day, but that Mary, the Mother of Christ, was on this day, from this world of toil, taken up to the kingdom of heaven, to her dear Son, Whom she had borne in life, with Whom she rejoices in eternal mirth to all eternity. If we say of this feast day more than we read in the holy books that have been composed by the inspiration of God, then should we be like to those heretics, who from their own imagination, or from dreams, have recorded many false traditions; but the orthodox teachers—Augustine, Jerome, Gregory, and many others—have, through their wisdom, rejected them. These heretical books, nevertheless, yet exist, both in Latin and in English, and ignorant men read them. It is enough for believing men to read and to say what is true; and few are those men who can perfectly examine all the holy books that have been inspired by God's mouth, or by the Spirit of God. Let everyone cast away the heretical leasings that lead the unwary to perdition, and let everyone read, or listen to, the holy lore, which directs us to the kingdom of heaven, if we will hear it.

"Let us now fervently pray the blessed Mary, who was to-day raised and exalted above the host of angels, that she intercede for us to the Almighty God, Who liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. Amen."

It was held that the Saints should be asked to intercede, but that they should not be directly worshipped. This appears throughout the writings of Ælfric, and Lingard,[1] vol. i. p. 315, in referring to the private prayers of the layman, quotes Thorpe's *Eccl. Institutes*, where the directions run :—

"And this being done, and his Creator alone being worshipped, let him call upon God's saints, that they may intercede for him with God, calling first on St. Mary, and then on all God's saints."

So Lingard, vol. ii. p. 83, etc., remarks :—

"They learned to look up to the Saints in heaven with feelings of confidence and affection; to consider them as friends and protectors, and to implore their aid in the hour of distress, with the hope that God would grant to the prayer of the patron what He might otherwise refuse to the prayer of the suppliant."

Again, p. 85, Lingard quotes from Archbishop Theodore, who points out the difference between the language of the Litany, when the petition is addressed to our Lord, and when it is addressed to the saints :—

"In primis dicitur, 'Christe, audi nos,' ac deinde, 'Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis'; neque dicitur, 'Christe ora pro nobis, et Sancta Maria, vel Sancte Petre audi nos'; sed, 'Christe audi nos, et Fili Dei, Te rogamus, audi nos.'"

Bede concludes a sermon on John the Baptist with these words :—

"It is right that on this festival we seek his help

in our prayers, who was to us the herald of salvation. Let us then solicit him to obtain for us by his intercession, that we may come to that Saviour to whom he bore testimony," etc.

To this may be added the testimony of Alcuin, in his litany for every day in the week :—

" Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis ; Sancta Maria, intercede pro me peccatore. Sancta Maria adjuva me in hora exitus mei ex hac præsenti vita."

Alcuin also says in his sermon on St. Willibrord :—

" O blessed priest of Christ, do not abandon us who labour here on earth, but assist us continually by thy prayers from heaven. While thou wast among men, thy life was pleasing to God, let thy prayers, now that thou art with God, be directed to the profit of men. Let us who celebrate thy festival, experience the aid of thy intercession."

An instance of how, while asking for their intercessions, the saints were not to be worshipped, is afforded by Ælfric's words in one of the *Catholic Homilies*, Thorpe, vol. i. p. 175 :—

" We pray for their intercessions to holy men, that they may mediate for us with their Lord and our Lord ; still, we do not worship them as we do God, nor would they permit it, as the angel said to John the Apostle, when he would fall at his feet : ' Do thou it not, that thou bowest to me, I am God's servant, as thou and thy brethren, worship God alone.' " [1]

[1] If we are faithful to the Reformation we shall firmly repudiate asking for the Intercession of the Saints.

The later Roman doctrine on St. Peter not yet held.

Sermon on St. Peter, Thorpe, vol. ii. p. 391.

Augustine is referred to as the source of this sermon, and the important point in it is, that in St. Peter's confession, Christ is described as the Rock, and not Peter, as in the subsequent teaching of the Roman Church.

"Augustinus tractavit, quod Petrus in figuram significat ecclesiam, quia Christus petra, Petrus populus Christianus." "Before that time his name was Simon, but the Lord appointed him this name, that is 'of stone' (*thaet is staenen*), to the end that he might be typical of Christ's Church. Christ is called *petra*, that is 'stone' (*stan*), and from that the whole Christian people is called *petrus*. Christ said, Thou art of stone, and over this stone, that is over the belief which thou now professest, I will build My Church. Over Myself I will build My Church, over Me I will build thee, and all the structure of the Christian Church. Peter now bears the semblance or type of the holy Church, in which he under Christ is chief, and by his walking on the sea betokened both the strong and weak among God's people. . . . They are weak who are slow to good works."

The passage about the rock and St. Peter is similarly interpreted by Bede, pp. 192 and 255:—

"Thou art Peter, and from this Rock from which

thou hast received thy name, that is upon Myself, I will build My Church. Upon this complete faith, which thou hast acknowledged (*fidei perfectionem*), I will build My Church; and whosoever shall wander from the company that holds this confession, though he may seem to himself to do great things, does not belong to the edifice of My Church."

Lingard (vol. ii. p. 89) has an interesting note on the canonisation of saints:—

"During the period of which I am writing, the power of canonizing saints was exercised by the provincial bishops and national councils. The first instance of a solemn canonization by the Pope (the opposite arguments of Benedict XIV. do not appear convincing, *de canon*, I. i. ch. vii.) occurs in the year 993, when John XV., after a diligent inquiry into the life and virtues of Ulric, bishop of Augsburg, enrolled him among the saints (Butler, vol. i. p. 44). It was not, however, till the beginning of the twelfth century that the privilege of canonization was restored to the Roman See by Alexander III."

Ælfric's Views of the Atonement

Ælfric says that Satan outwitted himself in his attack on our Lord.

"It was as if a hook held his jaws as he swallowed it, the bodily food which the devourer intended to seek being visible, while the Divinity of the Sufferer which would prove fatal to him was for the time

concealed. The devil was caught in the hook of His Incarnation, and while seeking to devour bodily food, he was pierced with the barb of our Lord's Divinity. So he lost the mortals whom he held by right, because he endeavoured to attack by means of death Him over Whom he had no right, as He was immortal."

The idea that Satan had a right over mankind was derived from the views of some of the old Fathers. They thought that the price paid by our Lord's death, the ransom effected by Him, was given as compensation to the devil, as mankind by their sin had become his captives. They supposed that Christ, wishing to be strictly just even to Satan, would not forcibly take the human race from him, but gave Himself for their redemption. This, however (according to the teaching that Ælfric had received), was not clearly known to the Evil One, when he compassed the death of the innocent Jesus. Satan thought that our Lord was only a man, and snatching at Him as such, was pierced and defeated by the fact that He was God. So Ælfric observes in his sermon on creation :—

" Christ came to us because He would suffer death for us, and so by His own death redeem all mankind who believe in Him from hell's torment. He would not take us forcibly from the devil's power, unless he had forfeited that power, but the devil did forfeit it entirely when he whetted and instigated

the hearts of the Jewish men to the slaying of Christ."

Dietrich remarks as to Ælfric's views of the redemption :—

"If we turn now to the question in what manner the personality of Christ, God and man, accomplished the redemption, in other words, where the merit of Christ's death lay, we find the theory of Gregory to be chiefly followed, though not expressed quite in the same way. The task in hand was to combine the mercy of God in Christ to humanity with His justice. Origen had held that Christ gave His life to the devil as a ransom, to render it just that man should be delivered. Gregory also started from the justice of the divine judgment, whereby humanity had allowed itself to fall under the power of the devil. But Ælfric did not limit himself to the views of any one or more authors, as to the meaning of spiritual mysteries."

Dietrich (in Niedner's *Zeitschrift*, volume for 1855) adds the following as expressing Ælfric's doctrine :—

"It was the custom in England that any one who could not produce compensation-money for a crime should become a serf, and in consequence his descendants also. This fitted in with what the Fathers had taught, that the devil forfeited the whole of mankind which had before been his property, by inviting the Jews to kill the Innocent One. For in the legal principles of the Anglo-

Saxons, not only every fatal blow, but also the incitement thereto was to be paid for by forfeiture to the King."

This Ælfric applies to men as being the property of Satan :—

"We have often said, and say again, that the justice of Christ is so great that He would not take mankind from the devil by force, unless Satan forfeited that power. But the devil did forfeit it, when he led astray the people to killing the Christ of Almighty God, and through His innocent death we are set free from eternal death, if we do not destroy ourselves."

Another aspect, however, is elsewhere set forth by Ælfric, where he says of the Lamb of God—"that he offered Himself in sacrifice to the Father."

Commenting on John iii. 14, Ælfric remarks :—

"By His being lifted up on the cross He healed our sins, His death led to life ; we look to His death, that the death may not hurt us that was caused by the serpent ; Christ by His death brought death to nought."

So in the sermon for Pentecost :—

"The offered Lamb betokened the slaying of Christ, Who, innocent, was offered to His Father for our Redemption. Now is His passion and His resurrection our Eastertide, because He redeemed us from the thraldom of the devil."

Again, in the Sermon on the Nativity (*Catholic Homilies*, vol. ii.):—

"Adam, the first man, sinned against God, and brake his Creator's commandment, and obeyed the devil's teaching, and was delivered to the devil, he and all mankind, into hell-torment. Then God ever meditated from the beginning of the world how He might help mankind, and resave them from the power of the devil. Then He would not send to our redemption either angel, or archangel, or prophets, or apostles, but the Father sent His only-begotten Son to suffering and to death for the redemption of mankind. Then God manifested how great love He had and hath for us, when He sent His own Child to be slain for us. Who durst desire that the Almighty King should urge to death His only-begotten Prince, and so save the servant? The Son was not forced to become man, and afterwards to suffer for us, but He was ever obedient to His Father unto death. He was only-begotten with His Father in heaven; then would He not be alone, but would have brothers, and came to us, because He would bring us to His kingdom, to which we had been created."

Predestination

As regards predestination (Dietrich, in Niedner, volume for 1855, p. 564) Ælfric did not follow the teaching of St. Augustine, but agreed with John

Scotus Erigena. Ælfric holds that God knows beforehand how men will act, He therefore foresees their destiny, but never designs any to perdition by arbitrary decree, or fails to give them an opportunity of choosing the right. So, in his *Homily on the Epiphany*, Ælfric remarks :—

"It is true that God loved Jacob and hated Esau (Rom. ix. 13); but this was not from ordering of fate, but on account of their divergent merits."

In this common-sense conclusion, Ælfric shows a difference of theological view from Gregory the Great also, whom he often follows, as the Apostle of England, who sent the mission to convert the Saxons. Gregory held to predestination rather than a decision by merit. Further Ælfric says :—

"God knows certainly the number of the chosen angels, and the chosen human beings, and also the number of the spirits that would be lost by pride, and the number of godless men who would go under owing to their godlessness; but He appointed no one to evil, for He is altogether good, and appointed no one to destruction, because He is true Life. He appointed the chosen to eternal life, because He knew that in the future they would be such, through His Grace and their obedience. He would not destine the godless to His kingdom because He knew that they would be godless through their own wrong-headedness."

Ælfric, though closely following Ratramnus on

the subject of the Holy Eucharist, did not follow his views on predestination, a further proof that he thought for himself where he considered it allowable to do so.

On the difficult questions as to freedom and predestination, Ælfric took a practical and common-sense view. He remarks (*Lives of the Saints*, vol. i. p. 381):—

"God compelleth us not to do good, neither doth He debar us from working evil, because He hath given us our own choice. . . . This is the gift, that a man may do what he will, and this is the law, that God recompenseth to every man according to his works, both in this world, and that which is to come, whether good or evil, whichever he practiseth. Now if any man should wonder, why God willeth to give to evil men their own freedom, when He knoweth beforehand, that they will do evil, then say we, that it becometh not any rich king, that they all should be slaves who have to serve him, and that there should not be one free man in his dominion. So likewise it befitteth not the Almighty Lord that in all His kingdom there should not be any who should not be strictly compelled in doing service. Now our freedom ever needeth God's assistance, because we can do no good thing without God's help; may He ever guide us in this world, and bring us through Himself to the eternal life even as He promised to all them that love Him. To Him be praise and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

The same teaching occurs in *The Lives of the Saints* (vol. i. p. 383) on Auguries:—

"God compelleth us not to do good,
Neither doth He debar us from working evil,
Because He hath given us our own choice.
He gave a most stedfast gift and a most stedfast law
Together with that gift, to every man until his end, both to poor and rich.
This is the gift, that a man may do what he will,
And this is the law, that God recompenseth to every man according to his works,
Both in this world, and in that which is to come,
Whether good or evil, whichsoever he practiseth.
Now if any man should wonder why God willed
To give to evil men their own freedom,
When He knoweth beforehand, that they will do evil,
Then say we, that it becometh not any rich king
That they all should be slaves who have to serve him,
And that there should not be one freeman in his dominion.
So likewise it befitteth not the Almighty Lord,
That in all His kingdom there should not be any creature
Who should not be strictly compelled to serve Him."

On the Seven Orders

Thorpe's *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, vol. ii. p. 379. From the Pastoral Epistle written by Ælfric, Abbot, for Wulfstan, Archbishop of York:—

"34. Beloved, seven orders are appointed in books for God's ministries in Christ's Church. One is ostiarius, the second is lector, the third

exorcista, the fourth acoluthus, the fifth subdiaconus, the sixth diaconus, the seventh presbyter or episcopus. Ostiarius is the doorkeeper, who holds the keys of the church. Lector is the reader who reads in church. Exorcista is an adjuror, who reads over men diseased in mind, and the infirm. Acoluthus is he who bears the light at God's ministries. Subdiaconus is the under deacon, who bears the chalice and the dish at the mass, and ministers to the deacon. Diaconus the minister is called who ministers to the mass-priest, or to the bishop, at the mass, and reads the gospel, he may also give the bread, and baptize children, if need be.

" 35. Beloved, understand that both are of one order,[1] the bishop and the mass-priest, that is, of the seventh church order, as holy books tell us; and both celebrate mass, and preach to men, and both ought alike to observe chastity, and preach righteousness to other men, and set good example; and no order is reckoned for the holy ministry, except the seven orders which we have before mentioned.

" 36. The bishop is, however, appointed in some degree for greater benediction than the mass-priest; that is, to hallow churches, and to ordain priests, to confirm men, and to bless the oil: because it were too multifarious if all mass-priests must do this.

" 37. It is proper for priests, however, on account

[1] I commend this statement that priests and bishops belong to the same order to the consideration of experts in theology, both to those who are Presbyterian and those who are Episcopalian.

of that seniority, to be humbly subordinate to their bishop, and live by his direction and wisdom; and that he superintend them, and head their courses, so as his name represents, his name is called *episcopus*, that is in English, overseeing, because he constantly oversees his subordinates, and directs them to proper manners, even as he can most earnestly."

The Anglo-Saxon Doctrine of Penitence

An Address on Confession and Penitence (in Anglo-Saxon), and with an English translation, will be found in Thorpe's *Catholic Homilies*, vol. ii. p. 603. In this, confession is regarded as obligatory.

"No man shall delay to atone for his sins, because God promises to every penitent forgiveness of his sins, but he promises not to any procrastinator certain life till the morrow. Let no man be ashamed to make known his sins to one teacher, for he who will not in this world confess his sins with true repentance, shall be put to shame before God Almighty, and before His hosts of angels, and before all men, and before all devils, at the great doom, where we shall all be gathered. There will the deeds of us all be made known to all those hosts, and he who cannot now for shame confess his sins to one man, shall then be put to shame before heaven's inhabitants, and earth's inhabitants, and hell's inhabitants and his shame shall be endless. For no man obtains forgiveness of his sins from

God, unless he confess them to some man of God and by his doom expiate them."

It appears that in the Anglo-Saxon Church private confession and absolution were regarded as the normal way of obtaining forgiveness; whereas, in our own Reformed Church, it is evident that these are intended to be exceptional, as is shown by the sentence referring to the matter in our Communion Service—and we hold that sins confessed in penitence to God only are blotted out by the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Church of England has respect for the individual conscience. Compare the First Prayer Book of Edward VI. End of the second Exhortation:—

"Requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general confession, not to be offended with them that do use, to their further satisfying, the auricular and secret confession of the priest; nor those also which think needful or convenient, for the quietness of their own consciences, particularly to open their sins to the priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble confession to God and the general confession to the Church; but in all things to follow and keep the rule of charity; and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or consciences; whereas he hath no warrant of God's word to the same."

One of Ælfric's latest writings was a *Treatise on*

Purity (*Clœnnysse*) addressed to a thane named Siegfyrth, in whose domain a hermit resided who had written in defence of the marriage of the clergy. The arguments adduced by this hermit do not appear to be recorded. As he was himself an ascetic they would have all the more weight in defence of family life. We can imagine him saying that the Pastoral Epistles evidently contemplate a married clergy; that as St. Paul chose the image of marriage to describe the union of Christ and His Church, there can be nothing degrading in it, and that St. Paul himself represents St. Peter as at liberty to take his wife about with him if he thought fit. Further, that St. Paul where he advises celibacy plainly says that his advice is for the "present distress." The hermit may have gone on to represent the arguments derivable from observation and experience of human affairs. It was all very well to associate people together in a monastery, where they might give each other social help towards a career of devotion. But priests residing alone in remote villages would be exposed to great temptations to a selfish life, and would miss the divinely ordained training to self-denial and constant thought for others, which a wife and family must bring with them. He would add that if celibacy had any superior merit in itself, it could only develop that merit where it was voluntary, for no compulsory goodness can be

meritorious. To ourselves it must appear that the evils of obligatory celibacy in the ministers of the Church are shown by history to have far outweighed its advantages. Among these drawbacks it made the clergy too much into a separate caste.

CHAPTER VI

TEACHING OF ÆLFRIC ON HOLY COMMUNION

The teaching of Ælfric as to the Holy Communion has been the main doctrinal point of attraction in his writings, since the days of the Reformation. At that time Archbishop Parker edited the *Homily on the Easter Eucharist* with his signature and those of thirteen of his suffragans, with the object of showing that the doctrine of transubstantiation, which the Reformers rejected, had not been held in the Anglo-Saxon Church. Other writers of the Church of England, among them Dr. Hook, have followed in the wake of Archbishop Parker. Dr. Lingard, seeing the question from the Roman side, endeavours to show by quotations from the Homilies of Bede, that Ælfric's view was not the usual one. But the Homilies of Ælfric were written on purpose to be used as sermons to the people by the clergy of the Anglo-Saxon Church, and they were dedicated to Sigeric, the Archbishop of Canterbury. We may therefore certainly regard the doctrine they contain as set forth by authority.

Definitions beyond what had been previously

ventured upon had been given regarding the Eucharist by Paschasius Radbert. He was a monk of the Abbey of Corbey, and after being master of the monastic school, became Abbot in 844. About 831 he composed a treatise on the Eucharist for the instruction of some of the younger monks, in one of the daughter houses of the Abbey of Corbey, and in 844 he presented a second edition of this treatise under the title, "On the Lord's Body and Blood," to the King, afterwards the Emperor, Charles the Bald. In this, while he lays stress on the reception being spiritual and not carnal, he expresses the contradictory opinion that the bread and wine cease to exist in their own nature, and are changed into the same Body and Blood of Christ that was born of the Virgin Mary—a doctrine which was eventually known and sanctioned in the Roman Church as transubstantiation. There had been in the Eastern Church writers who had gone nearly as far as to say this; but they had not laid it down as definitely as Paschasius; and had left the doctrine more involved in mystery.

Paschasius says: "Though the figure of bread and wine remain, yet these are altogether a figure, —and after consecration we must believe that there is nothing else than the flesh and blood of Christ." He then proceeds to define what this flesh and blood are, not leaving them in the obscurity and mystery suggested by the sixth

chapter of St. John's Gospel, and regardless of our Lord's words, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing," he asserts that this certainly is no other flesh than that which was born of Mary, and suffered on the cross and rose from the tomb, and he explains it as follows: "As real flesh was created from the Virgin without paternal generation, by the operation of the Spirit, so by the operation of the same Spirit the same body and blood of Christ is mystically consecrated from the substance of bread and wine."

Rabanus Maurus became Abbot of Fulda in 825, and Archbishop of Mentz in 847. In the following words he repudiates the teaching of Paschasius Radbert:—

"Certain people lately, having wrong ideas about the Sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord, have said that this is the body itself and blood of the Lord which was born of the Virgin Mary, and in which the Lord suffered on the cross, and rose from the tomb; in reply to which error, writing as fully as we could to Egilus the Abbot, we have explained what is rightly to be believed about the body itself. How is it right for this flesh of Christ to be eaten, if it was born of Mary and suffered on the cross, and rose from the tomb, especially as that flesh of Christ rising from the tomb was so glorified that it could no longer in any way be eaten?"

But it was from the teaching of Ratramnus that Ælfric derived the expressions which he uses as to

the doctrine of the Eucharist. Ratramnus was a monk and priest at Corbey, the monastery of Paschasius himself, and afterwards became Abbot of Orbais. He is known to have been alive in 870, and a considerable part of Ælfric's sermon for Easter Day, describing the nature of the Presence in the Eucharist is taken word for word from Ratramnus. This will appear from the following extract from the quotations given by the Rev. Darwell Stone in his *History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*, when compared with Ælfric's statements in the following pages.[1]

It appears that King Charles the Bald addressed two questions in regard to the doctrine of the Eucharist to Ratramnus. These two questions are thus described by him:—

"Your excellent Majesty inquires whether the body and blood of Christ, which in the Church is taken by the mouth of the faithful, is made such in mystery, or in external reality, that is, whether it contains anything hidden, which is open only to the eyes of faith, or whether, without the veil of any mystery, the sight of the body outwardly sees that which the vision of the mind inwardly beholds, so that all that is done is clearly manifested and seen; and whether it is that body itself which was born of Mary, and suffered and died and was buried, which rose again and ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of the Father."

[1] See Darwell Stone, *The Holy Eucharist*, vol. i. p. 226.

Further on Ratramnus says :—

"That bread which by the ministry of the priest is made the body of Christ, shows one thing outwardly to the human senses, and proclaims another thing inwardly to the minds of the faithful. Outwardly indeed the form of bread, which it was before, is presented, the colour is exhibited, the taste is perceived; but inwardly a far different, and much more precious and more excellent thing is signified, because what is heavenly and divine, that is the body of Christ, is shown forth, which is perceived and taken and eaten, not by the fleshly senses, but by the gaze of the faithful soul. Likewise the wine, which by the consecration of the priest is made the Sacrament of the blood of Christ, shows one thing on the surface, and contains another thing within. For what else is seen on the surface but the substance of wine? Taste it, there is the savour of wine, look at it, there you see the colour of wine. But if you consider it within, no longer the liquid of wine, but the liquid of the blood of Christ is the savour when it is tasted, and is recognised when it is beheld, and is acknowledged when it is smelt to the minds of believers. Since no one can deny that this is so, it is plain that the bread and wine are by way of figure the body and blood of Christ. For, neither according to sight is the nature of flesh recognised in that bread, nor is the fluid of blood manifested in that wine, yet after the mystic consecration they are no longer called bread and wine, but the body and blood of Christ."

Again Ratramnus remarks:—

"Since this change is made not corporally but spiritually, it must be said that it has been made by way of figure, since under the veil of bodily bread and wine the spiritual body and spiritual blood exist. Not that two things different from one another exist, namely body and spirit, but that one and the same thing is in one respect the nature (species) of bread and wine, and in another respect the body and blood of Christ. So far as they are corporally handled, their nature (species) is that of corporal creatures; but according to their power, and as they have been spiritually made, they are the mysteries of the body and blood of Christ.

"Let us consider the font of Holy Baptism . . . in that font, if one considers what the bodily senses see, there is seen the element of water, which is subject to corruption, and is not capable of washing anything but the body; but through the consecration of the priest the power of the Holy Ghost is added, and it is made able to wash not only bodies but also souls, and by spiritual efficacy to remove spiritual stains.

"The sea and the cloud (*i.e.* those referred to in 1 Cor. x. 1–4) conveyed the cleansing of sanctification not in respect of their outward bodily nature but in respect of that sanctification of the Holy Ghost which they invisibly contained. Christ said to His disciples, who received His words not with unbelief but in faith, though they did not grasp how to understand them, 'Does this make you stumble? What then if ye should see the Son of

Man ascending where He was before?' as though to say, 'Think not that My flesh or My blood is to be corporally eaten or drunk by you, or that it has been divided or is to be divided into pieces, for after My resurrection ye shall see Me ascend into heaven with the completeness of My whole body and blood. Then shall ye understand that My flesh is not to be eaten by believers as faithless people think, but that bread and wine, really converted in mystery into the substance of My body and blood, are to be taken by believers.'

"From all which has so far been said it has been shown that the body and blood of Christ which are received by the mouth of the faithful in the Church, are figures in respect of visible nature; but in respect of invisible substance, that is the power of the divine Word, they are really the body and blood of Christ.

"Now we must examine the second question propounded, and see whether that body itself which was born of Mary and suffered and died and was buried, which sits at the right hand of the Father, is that which is daily taken by the mouth of the faithful in the Church, in the mystery of the Sacraments. . . . St. Ambrose says that in that mystery of the body and blood of Christ a change is made wonderfully because it is divine, and ineffably because it is incomprehensible. . . . As regards the substance of the creatures, they are after consecration what they were before. Bread and wine they were before, and after they have been consecrated, they are seen to remain in the same nature

(species). There has been then an inner change by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost; and it is this which faith beholds, which feeds the soul, which supplies the substance of eternal life. . . . Those things which are seen are not in nature (species) but in power the body and blood of Christ. . . . St. Ambrose distinguishes between the Sacrament of the flesh and the external reality of the flesh (veritate) inasmuch as he says that He was crucified and buried in the external reality (veritate) of the flesh which He took of the Virgin, but that the mystery which is now celebrated in the Church is the Sacrament of that real flesh in which He was crucified; he openly teaches the faithful that that flesh in respect of which Christ was crucified and buried is not a mystery but an external reality of nature (veritas naturae), but that this flesh which now contains the likeness of that flesh in mystery is not flesh by nature (in specie) but sacramentally (sacramento), since indeed as to nature (in specie) it is bread, but by way of Sacrament it is the real body of Christ. . . . The difference is great which distinguishes the body in which Christ suffered and the blood which He shed from His side when hanging on the cross, from this body which is daily celebrated by the faithful, so that it may be a mystery of that blood by which the world was redeemed.

"It is further to be considered that in the bread there is a figure not only of the body of Christ, but also of the body of the people believing in Him. . . . As that bread is taken to be the body

of Christ in mystery, so also in mystery the members of the people believing in Christ are signified. And as that bread is called the body of believers not corporally but spiritually, so also it must be understood to be the body of Christ not corporally but spiritually. So also water is ordered to be mixed with the wine which is called the blood of Christ and one is not allowed to be offered without the other . . . the water in the sacrament bears the image of the people. If then the wine when consecrated by the office of the ministers is corporally converted into the blood of Christ, the water also which is mixed with it must be corporally converted into the blood of the believing people. . . . Whatever signification there is of the body of the people in the water is taken spiritually; whatever therefore is indicated by the blood of Christ in the wine must be taken spiritually. . . .

"Let it not be thought that in the mystery of the Sacrament the body and blood of the Lord Himself are not taken by the faithful, for faith receives what it believes, not what the eye sees. It is spiritual food and spiritual drink, spiritually feeding the soul and bestowing the life of eternal satisfaction."

A Sermon on the Sacrifice on Easter Day, by Ælfric (*Catholic Homilies*, p. 267, etc.)

"The people of Israel ate the flesh of the lamb at their Easter-tide, when they were delivered, and we now partake spiritually of Christ's Body, and

drink His Blood, when with true belief we partake of the holy housel. The time they held for seven days, with great veneration, was their Easter-tide, in which they were delivered from Pharaoh, and departed from the country, so likewise we Christian men hold Christ's resurrection as our Easter-tide, during these seven days, because, through His passion and resurrection, we are redeemed, and we shall be purified by partaking of the holy housel, as Christ Himself said in His Gospel, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye have not life in you, unless ye eat My Flesh and drink My Blood. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, he dwelleth in Me, and I in him, and he shall have everlasting life, and I will raise him at the last day. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. Not so as your fathers ate the heavenly meat in the wilderness, and afterwards died, he who eateth this bread shall live to eternity.' He hallowed the bread before His passion, and distributed to His disciples, thus saying, 'Eat this bread, it is My Body,' and 'do this in My remembrance.' Afterwards He blessed wine in a cup, and said, 'Drink ye all of this: this is My Blood, which shall be shed for many in forgiveness of sins.' The Apostles did as Christ commanded, in afterwards hallowing bread and wine for housel in His remembrance. In like manner their aftercomers and all priests, at Christ's behest, hallow bread and wine for housel in His name, with the apostolic blessing.

"Now certain men have often inquired, and yet frequently inquire, how the bread, which is prepared

from corn, and baked by the heat of the fire, can be changed to Christ's body; or the wine, which is wrung from many berries, can by any blessing be changed to the Lord's Blood? Now we say to such men, that some things are said of Christ typically, some literally. It is a true and certain thing that Christ was born of a maiden, and of His own will suffered death, and was buried, and on this day arose from death. He is called bread typically, and lamb, and lion, and whatever else. He is called bread, because He is the life of us and of angels; He is called a lamb for His innocence; a lion for the strength wherewith He overcame the strong devil. But yet, according to true nature, Christ is neither bread, nor a lamb, nor a lion. Why then is the holy housel called Christ's body or His Blood, if it is not truly that which it is called? But the bread and the wine which are hallowed through the mass of the priests, appear one thing to human understandings without, and cry another thing to believing minds within. Without, they appear bread and wine, both in aspect and in taste; but they are truly, after the hallowing, Christ's Body and His Blood through a ghostly mystery. A heathen child is baptized, but it varies not its aspect without, although it be changed within. It is brought to the font-vessel sinful through Adam's transgression, but it will be washed from all sins within, though it outwardly change not its aspect. In like manner the holy font-water, which is called the well-spring of life, is in appearance like other waters, and is subject to corruption; but the might of the Holy

Ghost approaches the corruptible water through the blessing of the priests, and it can afterwards wash body and soul from all sins through ghostly might. Lo, now we see two things in this one creature! According to true nature the water is a corruptible fluid, and according to a ghostly mystery has salutary power; in like manner, if we behold the holy housel in a bodily sense, then we see that it is a corruptible and changeable creature. But if we distinguish the ghostly might therein, then understand we that there is life in it, and that it gives immortality to those who partake of it with belief. Great is the difference between the invisible might of the holy housel, and the visible appearance of its own nature. By nature it is corruptible bread and corruptible wine, and is by power of the divine word truly Christ's Body and His Blood; not, however, bodily, but spiritually. Great is the difference between the Body in which Christ suffered, and the Body which is hallowed for housel. The Body verily in which Christ suffered was born of Mary's flesh, with blood and with bones, with skin and with sinews, with human limbs, quickened by a rational soul; and His ghostly Body, which we call housel, is gathered of many corns,[1] without blood and bone, limbless and soulless, and there is therefore nothing therein to be understood bodily, but all is to be understood spiritually. Whatsoever there is in the housel which gives us

[1] See *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, p. 42. Edited by Spence. "This broken bread was once scattered over the hills, and having been gathered together became one."

the substance of life, that comes from its ghostly power and invisible efficacy; therefore is the holy housel called a mystery, because one thing is seen therein and another thing understood. That which is there seen has a bodily appearance, and that which we understand therein has ghostly might. Verily Christ's Body which suffered death, and from death arose, will henceforth never die, but is eternal and impassible. The housel is temporary, not eternal; corruptible, and is distributed piecemeal; chewed betwixt teeth, and sent into the belly: but with spiritual force, the whole is in every part. Many receive the holy Body, and nevertheless the whole is in every part by a ghostly miracle. Though to one man a less part be allotted, yet is there no more power in the greater part than in the less; because it is in every man whole, by invisible might.

"This mystery is a pledge and a symbol; Christ's Body is truth. This pledge we hold mystically until we come to the truth, and then will this pledge be ended. But it is, as we before said, Christ's Body and His Blood, not bodily but spiritually. Ye are not to inquire how it is done, but to hold in your belief that it is so done."

It will be evident to the reader that Ælfric's Easter Sermon was largely taken from Ratramnus, and that he regarded that writer as setting forth the true and ancient doctrine of the Church. Dr. Lingard, however, refers to passages in the writings of Bede to show that the views of Ælfric were not

those generally held. Some of these passages must now be considered. It should, however, be noticed that in his writings sent to Bishop Wulfsine of Sherborne and to Archbishop Wulfstan of York, Ælfric repeats the same view, "not bodily, but ghostly," and these prelates, as well as Archbishop Sigeric, would not have accepted his expressions unless they had been usual in the Church.

We have just stated that Dr. Lingard argues that the views of the Eucharist expressed by Ælfric, and previously by Ratramnus, were unusual and not in the general line of Church teaching. To support this argument he quotes Bede: "Missarum solemnia celebrantes corpus sacrosanctum et pretiosum, agni sanguinem quo a peccatis redempti sumus denuo Deo in profectum nostræ salutis immolamus." "When we are celebrating the sacred rites of the mass, we offer afresh to God the most holy Body, and the precious Blood of the Lamb, for our salvation" (Bede, *Hom. in vig. Pasch.* p. 31). Again he describes souls in purgatory as freed from their punishments by the oblations of the saving Victim: "Hostiæ salutaris oblationibus absoluti pœnis." This was unquestionably the doctrine of the Anglo-Saxon Church; but it does not follow that the explanations given by Paschasius Radbert are at all necessary consequences. The whole Early Church, both of East and West, had held that after consecration there

was a Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the bread and wine, but they had not held that the bread and wine underwent a miraculous change, and ceased to be the bread and wine that they appeared to be.

Some expressions tending in this direction had now and then been used; but the mystery had usually been considered to lie in the fact that the consecrated elements were actual bread and wine still, but that the Body and Blood of Christ were present in them.[1] Hence the teaching of Paschasius defined a mystery which had hitherto been judiciously left in its due obscurity, and defined it in a manner which Ratramnus and others, and after them Ælfric, regarded as novel and erroneous. The truth is that Paschasius put forth his idea as a pious explanation; his teaching was adopted and pressed forward by Lanfranc and others, and in 1050, at a Council in Rome, and in some similar Councils elsewhere, this doctrine was maintained, and Berengar, who had been advocating the views of Ratramnus, was condemned. At one of these Councils, that held at Rome, two Anglo-Saxon bishops are said by Lingard to have been present, and he regards this as final, in proof that the

[1] See Archdeacon Freeman's *Principles of Divine Service*. He says that for the first thousand years the Church regarded the mystery as having two poles; on the one hand the elements remained bread and wine, on the other they contained the Body and Blood of Christ.

Anglo-Saxon Church did not hold with Ælfric. But in that case, why were his homilies accepted by Archbishop Sigeric? Ælfric's *Homily on the Eucharist* was republished in the time of Archbishop Parker, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, with the addition of some other passages of his writings on the same subject, and the Archbishop added his signature with those of thirteen of his suffragans.

The Catalogue in the Bodleian gives the date of the publication of this little book as being the year 1567. It is entitled, "A testimonie of Antiquitie, showing the auncient fayth of the Church of England touching the Sacrament of the body and bloude of the Lord, here publicly preached, and also received in the Saxon tyme, above 600 years ago."

"Jer. vi. 16. 'Go into the streetes, and inquyre for the olde way, and if it be the good and right way, then goe therein, that ye may finde rest for your soules. But they say: we will not walk therein.' Imprinted at London, by John Day, dwelling over Aldersgate beneath St. Martyn's."

While quoting the Sermon in which Ælfric enunciates a doctrine opposed to that of transubstantiation, these rulers of the Church in the days of Elizabeth add a note in which they repudiate certain errors that they find in the Anglo-Saxon time. They express themselves as follows :—

"As the writynges of the fathers even of the first age of the Church be not thought on all partes so perfect, that whatsoever thing hath been of them spoken ought to be received without all exception, (which honours trulye themselves both knewe and also have confessed to be only due to the most holy and tried word of God,) so in this Sermon here published some things be spoken not consonant to sound doctrine; but rather to such corruption of greate ignorance and superstition, as hath taken root in the church of long time, being over much cumbered with monckery. As while it speaketh of the masse to be profitable to the quick and dead; of the mixture of water with wine; and whereas as here is also made reporte of vague miracles, which notwithstanding seems to have been infarced,[1] for that they stand in their place unaptly, and without purpose, and the matter without them, both before and after, doth hange in itself most orderly; with some other suspitious words sounding to superstition. But all these things that be thus of some reprehension be as it were by the way touched; the full and whole discourse of all the former part of the sermon, and almost of the whole sermon is about the understanding of the Sacramentall bread and wine, how it is the bodye and blood of Christ our Saviour, by which is revealed and made knownen what hath been the common taught doctrine of the Church of England on this behalfe many hundreth yeares agoe, contrarye to the unadvised writing of some now a dayes. Now that this Saxon Homily

[1] A word now disused—French, "farcie."

with the other testimonies, before alleadged, to the olde anncient books, (whereof some be written in the olde Saxon, and some in the Lattyne) from whence they are taken, these here underwritten upon diligent perusing and comparing the same have found by conference, that they are truly put forth in print without any adding, or withdrawing anything for the more faithful reporting of the same, and therefore for the better credit of those who have subscribed their names.

MATTHEWE, Archbishop of Canterbury
THOMAS, Archbishop of Yorke
EDMUND, Bishop of London
JAMES, Byshop of Durham
ROBERT, Byshop of Winchester
WILLIAM, Byshop of Chichester
JOHN, Byshop of Hereford
RICHARD, Byshop of Elye
EDWINE, Byshop of Worcester
NICHOLAS, Bishop of Lincolne
RICHARD, Byshop of St. Davis
JOHN, Byshop of Lichfield and Coventry
JOHN, Bishop of Norwiche
JOHN, Byshop of Carlile
NICHOLAS, Bishop of Bangor."

The same little book, printed by Day, contains also an extract from what Ælfric wrote to Wulfsine, Bishop of Sherborne. In this he is described as Abbot of St. Albans and Malmesbury, which is of course a mistake.

The same doctrine as to the Eucharist is referred to here. As has been already observed, this is a strong additional proof that Ælfric's doctrine was the one held by the Anglo-Saxon bishops.

"Some priests keepe the housell that is consecrate on Easter Day all the yere for syke men. But they do greatly amysse, because it waxeth hoary and rotten. And these will not understand how grievous penance the penitential booke teacheth by thys, if the housell become hoary and rotten; or if it be lost; or if it be eaten of beasts by negligence. He shall reserve more carefully that holy housell, and not reserve it too long, but consecrate other of newe for syke men alwayes within a weke or a fortnight, that it be not so much as hoary.

"For so holy is the housell which to-day is hallowed as that which on Easter Day was hallowed. That holy housel is Christes bodye, not bodylye, but ghostlye. Not the body which He suffered in, but the body of which He spake when He blessed bread and wine, to housel a night before His suffering, and sayd by the blessed bread, 'Thys is my body,' and again, by the holy wine, 'this is my bloude,' 'which is shed for many in forgiveness of sins.' Understand now that the Lord, Who could turn the bread before His suffering to His body, and the wine to his bloude ghostlye, that the selfsame Lord blesseth dayly through the priests hands bread and wine to His ghostlye body, and to His ghostlye bloude."

In the same little book the Epistle to Wulfstan

is also given, and in the Latin, as well as in the Anglo-Saxon. The Latin version is from MSS. in the libraries of Worcester and Exeter Cathedrals. The Latin words referring to the question of the Eucharist, run as follows:—

"'Non sit tamen hoc sacrificium corpus ejus in quo passus est pro nobis, neque sanguis ejus quem pro nobis effudit, sed spiritualiter corpus ejus efficitur et sanguis; sicut manna quod de cœlo pluit, et acqua quæ de petra fluxit.' Sicut Paulus apostolus ait.

"'Yet this sacrifice is not to be regarded as the body in which He suffered for us, nor the blood which He poured out for us, but it is made spiritually His body and blood; like the manna that was rained down from heaven, and the water that flowed from the rock,' as Paul the Apostle saith."

The following remarks are made in a note:—

"Here thou seest, good reader, how Elfrike, upon finding fault with an abuse of his tyme, which was that priests on Easter Day filled their housell box, and so kept the bread a whole yere for syke men, took an occasion to speake against the bodily presence of Christ in the Sacrament. So also in another epistle sent to Wulfstane, Archbishop of Yorke, he reprehending again this overlong reserving of the housell, addeth also words more at large against the same bodily presence."

Dietrich tells us with much truth that Ælfric did not stand on identical ground as regards the

Holy Communion with the Reformers on the one hand, or with the Council of Trent on the other, but on the ground of the ancient Church.

One or two recent writers consider that Ælfric's views on the Holy Eucharist cannot be of much value to us. This, however, was not the opinion of the learned Dr. Routh, who in the second volume of his *Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Opuscula* devotes nineteen pages to this subject, quoting Ælfric's epistles to Wulfsige and Wulfstan, and adding a series of erudite notes. In these he refers to Ælfric's Sermon for Easter, and its likeness to the teaching of Ratramnus on the Eucharist, and he ends by quoting the very divergent decree of the Council of Trent, commending the difference to the attention of the reader: "This Holy Synod declares that a change is made by consecration of the bread and wine, the whole substance of the bread being changed into the substance of the Body of Christ our Lord, and the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His Blood, which change is suitably and rightly called Transubstantiation by the Holy Catholic Church." In the last sentence of his notes Dr. Routh points out that there may be a link between these very divergent doctrines in the fact that there is a real, though spiritual and sacramental, feeding on the Body of Christ in the Eucharist, and that this is taught by Ratramnus, with many theologians, both

ancient and modern. Yet, on the other hand, we must not shut our eyes to the fact that the claim of priestly domination in the Middle Ages was largely based on the doctrine of transubstantiation following on consecration of the elements. This led Wiclif to oppose it.

Hooker, in his fifth book, has many weighty words as to the receiving of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Communion. His object is to show that, while various views are held as to the mode of our Lord's presence, yet all Christians are agreed upon that which is mainly important, namely, that the faithful receive Christ into their hearts. That is the chief point, and *how* Christ is present is a secondary matter which ought not to divide believers in Him. But he enters on the question, as a minor point, referring to both consubstantiation and transubstantiation, and to the receptionary view which it is evident that he himself adopts. This will appear from the following quotations:—

"The bread and cup are His Body and Blood because they are causes instrumental upon the receipt whereof the participation of His Body and Blood ensueth. . . . The real presence of Christ's most blessed Body and Blood is not therefore to be sought for in the Sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the Sacrament. . . . I see not which way it should be gathered by the words of Christ,

when and where the bread is His Body, or the cup His Blood, but only in the very heart and soul of him which receiveth them."

Archbishop Temple understands this to have been Hooker's meaning (Darwell Stone, *Holy Eucharist*, vol. ii. p. 582), for the Archbishop remarks:—

"Hooker, undeniably a very high authority on the doctrine of the Church of England, maintains that the real presence should not be looked for in the consecrated elements, but in the receivers. They certainly receive a real gift, and knowing this, why should we ask any further question? Knowing the reality of the gift, we know all that is needed for our spiritual life. The Anglican Church certainly teaches Hooker's doctrine, but to this it must be added that our Church nowhere forbids the further doctrine that there is a real presence in some way attached to the elements at the time of consecration and before the reception. This was the question raised by Mr. Bennett of Frome, and the Privy Council refused to condemn it."

I quote here, for comparison with the contents of this chapter, the teaching of our Evangelicals, from *Central Churchmanship*, a very able book by Canon Denton-Thompson (Longmans, 1911):—

"It is hard to account for the opinion which prevails in some quarters that Evangelical Churchmen do not believe in the doctrine of a 'real presence,' excepting it be that we have not sufficiently and positively stated our faith in this

particular. It may be, and probably is true, that in disavowing the mediæval dogma of transubstantiation we have not been careful to define the sense in which we believe that the Lord is really present in the Holy Communion. To us the 'real presence' of Christ is not confined to the sacrament of His body and blood, even though we hold He manifests Himself in a very special manner and degree in it. The promise, 'Where two or three are met together in My name, there am I in the midst,' cannot be limited to even this most solemn service. It applies to every occasion when 'in His name' we meet, and indeed, as originally given, there is no specific mention of the Holy Communion. But if 'where two or three' come together in the communion of a common life to realize a common fellowship, in the privileges of a common worship, the Lord has promised, 'there am I,' no such meeting exists in which we are more certain of His 'presence,' and none in which He more fully 'manifests' Himself to us, than in the service of His own direct appointment. It follows, therefore, that, as a matter of course, Evangelical Churchmen believe in the 'real presence' of Christ in the Holy Sacrament. Where we differ is not in the truth, but in its definition; not in the fact of the Lord's presence, but its location. To us the Holy Communion or Lord's Supper is a feast upon a sacrifice combining the ideas of food, fellowship, and festival. The Host at the feast is the Living Christ. He is present to receive every guest who comes in the

obedience of faith, and to impart to each the blessings symbolized in the broken bread and outpoured wine. We do not believe that the 'real presence' is to be located 'in or under' the form of bread and wine, much less do we believe that the bread and wine become His actual body and blood. No. In our view of the doctrine of the 'real presence,' which we hold to be higher and truer, more spiritual and more glorious, than that which locates the presence in the elements, the Lord is not limited to or conditioned by the bread and wine, however sacred they may be, and are. He is not *in* the bread and wine, neither is He *on* the Holy Table. And yet He is present, really spiritually present, standing 'in the midst' to be 'the true Bread,' 'the true Vine,' to every believing heart. As the symbols of His choice are ministered, He Himself ministers the realities they symbolize. As the faithful communicant receives the bread and wine, He imparts the virtues of His broken body and shed blood. Accepting these by faith we are 'made partakers of His flesh and blood.' By thus identifying ourselves with Christ in His death for us, we are afresh crucified with Him. His death becomes, by the apprehension of faith, our death. As He died for us, so we die with and in Him. And yet, even as His crucifixion issued in His resurrection, so our death with Him is followed by His life in us. The experience of dying with Him cannot be separated from the experience of living by Him. If we can say with St. Paul—and nowhere can we say it as in the Holy Communion

—'I have been crucified with Christ,' we may also say with the Apostle, 'nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' It is in the feast of our redemption, more than at any other time, we ought to realize the dual truth—Christ died for me—Christ lives in me. For there, we not only commemorate His death for us, but by identifying ourselves with it by faith, we celebrate also His risen life, and yet more, realize His life in us."

CHAPTER VII

CATHOLIC HOMILIES

Extracts from the Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church, formed by Ælfric, from the old Latin writers.

These two volumes are called Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*; Mr. Benjamin Thorpe, F.S.A., published them with an English translation in 1846, and he remarks in his Preface that this work "now presented to the Ælfric Society is the first fruit of its praiseworthy attempt to rescue from oblivion the literary remains of our forefathers, and was selected for the earliest publication of the Society, on account both of its valuable matter, and the beautiful medium by which it is conveyed." The following extracts are taken from this translation:—

Latin Preface to Vol. I. of *Catholic Homilies*

"I, Ælfric, scholar of Æthelwold, the benevolent and venerable Superior, send greeting of good wishes to his Lordship Archbishop Sigeric in the Lord. However rashly or presumptuously undertaken, I have nevertheless formed this book out of Latin

Part of Page from Aelfric's Catholic Homilies
11th Century Writing (Bodl. MS. 340)

writers, and from Holy Scripture, translating into our ordinary speech, for the edification of the simple, who know only this language both for reading and for hearing; and for that reason I have used no difficult words, but only plain English; so that our message might the more readily reach the hearts of those who read or hear, to the profit of the souls of those who cannot be taught in any other tongue, than that to which they are born. And I have not everywhere translated word for word, but have given the sense; and at the same time have carefully avoided falling into errors that might lead astray, lest I should be found carried away with any heresy, or darkened by any fallacy. The authors whom I have followed in this translation are these; Augustine of Hippo, Jerome, Bede, Gregory, Smaragdus, and sometimes Haymo; for the authority of these writers is willingly accepted by all Catholics.

"And I have not only explained the writings of the Evangelists in this work, but have also set forth the life and passion of saints, for the benefit of the unlearned of our race. I have arranged forty discourses in this book, believing that these might be enough for the faithful in one year, if they are read to them as they stand, by the ministers of God in church. But I have in my hands the preparation of a second book, which is to contain the sermons or histories omitted here. Moreover I have not touched upon all the Evangelic narratives assigned to the course of the year, but only those which I thought might be enough for simple persons, for the amendment of their lives, inasmuch as laymen cannot take in all things, though they may learn them from

the mouth of the learned. I have divided this translation into two books, intending that one should be read in church one year and the other in the following year, to guard against vagueness in the hearers; yet I give permission, if any one so wishes, that both should be used as one book.

"Therefore, if any one is displeased with my interpretation as not being always word for word, or desires a shorter explanation than the writings of the authors offer, or is dissatisfied that I have not gone through all the Gospels in their ecclesiastical order, let him frame for himself a book with a higher kind of exposition, as may please him; only I adjure him, not to pervert my translation, which I trust by the grace of God, and not from vain glory, I have been able to work out by careful study.

"I only beseech thee earnestly, most benignant Father Sigeric, to condescend to correct by thy industry, any defects of evil heresy, or misty error that thou mayest find in my translation; and then to allow this little volume to be sanctioned by thine authority, and not set down to the credit of so unworthy a person as the writer. Fare thee well always in Almighty God. Amen."

Ælfric follows this with an Anglo-Saxon preface :—

"I, Ælfric, monk and mass priest, although more weakly than for such orders is fitting, was sent in King Æthelred's days, from Bishop Ælfeah, Æthelwold's successor, to a minster which is called Cernel, at the prayer of Æthelmær the thane, whose birth and goodness are known everywhere. Then it

occurred to my mind, I trust through God's grace, that I would form this book by turning Latin into the English tongue; not from confidence of great learning, but because I have seen and heard of much error in many English books, which unlearned men, through their simplicity, have esteemed as great wisdom: and I regretted that they knew not, nor had not the evangelical doctrines among their writings, those men only excepted who knew Latin, and those books excepted, which King Ælfred wisely turned from Latin into English, and which are still available. . . . Very many I know in this country more learned than I am, but God manifests His wonders through whom He will. As an Almighty Worker He works His work through His chosen, not because He has need of our aid, but that we may earn eternal life by the performance of His work. Paul the Apostle said, 'We are God's assistants,' and yet we do nothing for God without the assistance of God."

Sermon on the Beginning of Creation.

P. 27. Note the expression—"Da Worhte He fela wundra, thaet men mihton gelyfan thaet He waes Godes Bearn (God's child)."

The same (*continued*).

P. 30. "The child laid in a bin"—"thaet cild geled on anre binne."

Sermon on the Nativity of our Lord.

P. 39. Dignity of men as Christians.—"Now we are accounted citizens of God, and like to angels; let

us therefore take care that sins do not separate us from this great dignity. Verily men are called gods; preserve therefore, O man, the dignity of a god against sins, since God became man for thee."

Our Lord's Person.

P. 41. "The divine nature is not mingled with the human nature, nor is there any separation. We might tell unto you a little simile, if it were not too mean; look now on an egg, how the white is not mingled with the yolk; and yet it is one egg. Nor also is Christ's divinity confounded with human nature, but He continueth to all eternity in one person undivided."

Sermon on the Passion of St. Stephen.

P. 53. A fine passage on Stephen and Paul.—"Whither Stephen preceded, stoned with the stones of Saul, thither Paul followed, aided by the prayers of Stephen."

Sermon on the Epiphany.

P. 113. On the choice of good and evil.—"The great mercy of our Lord hath redeemed us through His humanity, if we with all our hearts will obey His commandments."

. . . . . .

God "predestined no one to evil, for He Himself is all goodness, nor destined He any one to perdition, for He is true life."

Sermon on the Purification of St. Mary.

P. 145. Christ the true Light.—"As light scatters darkness, so also love and faith of Christ scatter all

vices and sins from our heart; and He is the glory and the bliss of all believing people."

Sermon for Shrove Sunday.

P. 157. Blind Bartimæus.—"If the devil trouble us with manifold thoughts and temptations, we should call louder and louder to Jesus, that He drive the evil temptations from our hearts, and that He enlighten our mind with His grace. . . . If we continue praying, then may we with our cry incline Jesus to stand, who was before passing on, and to hear our cry and enlighten our hearts with good and pure thoughts. Evil thoughts cannot harm us, if they are not pleasing to us; but the more the devil tempts us with evil thoughts, so much the better shall we be, and dearer to God, if we despise the devil and all his temptations through God's assistance."

The same (*continued*).

P. 163. "He fled from worldly honour, when He was chosen King; but he fled not from reproach and scorn, when the Jews would hang Him on a cross. He would not encircle His head with a golden crown, but with one of thorns, as it was done at His passion. He would not reign for awhile in this life, Who rules eternally in heaven. This world is not our country, but is our place of exile; therefore should we not set our hope in this deceitful life, but should hasten with good deserts to our own country, for which we were created, that is to the kingdom of heaven.

"Verily it is written, 'Whosoever will be a friend

of this world, he shall be accounted a foe of God.' Christ said in a certain place that the way is very narrow and steep which leads to the kingdom of heaven; and it is very wide and smooth which leads to hell torment. The way which leads to the kingdom of heaven is narrow and steep, in order that we should with difficulty gain our country. If we desire to obtain it, we should love mercy and chastity and truth, and righteousness and humility, and have true love to God and to men, and give alms according to our means, and be moderate in our food, and observe all other holy things. These things we cannot do without difficulties, but if we do them, then may we, with those labours, through God's support, ascend the steep way which leads us to eternal life. . . . Peter the Apostle said, 'Christ suffered for us, and gave us an example that we should follow His footsteps'; that is that we should suffer something for love of Christ, and for our sins. Well suffers the man, and acceptably to God, who strives against wickedness, and promotes goodness, as he best may. He who will suffer nothing in this life, shall suffer against his will in the life to come."

Sermon for the First Sunday in Lent.

P. 17. On our Lord's temptation (the second).—"If we anywhere slide down, arise forthwith, and earnestly mend what shall there be broken."

Mid-Lent Sunday.

P. 181. "Whatsoever good we do, let us do it without pride and vain praise. The man who does

any good for pride, to his own praise, will have no reward with God, but will have his punishment."

P. 185. "God hath wrought many miracles and daily works; but those miracles are much weakened in the sight of men, because they are very usual. . . . Who now gives fruit to our fields, and multiplies the harvest from a few grains of corn, but He who multiplied the five loaves?"

Sermon for Palm Sunday, vol. i. p. 213.

"We will say to you a parable. No man may make himself a king; for the people have the option to choose him for king who is agreeable to them; but after that he has been hallowed as king, he has power over the people, and they may not shake his yoke from their necks. In like manner, every man has his own choice before he sins, whether he will follow the devil's will, or withstand it. Then if he bind himself with the works of the devil, he cannot by his own power unbind himself, unless the Almighty God unbind him with the strong hand of His mercy. Of his own will and his own heedlessness he is bound, but through God's mercy he will be unbound, if he afterwards merit his liberation of God."

P. 261. On the equality of all men before God.—"All Christian men, whether high or low, noble or ignoble, and the lord, and the slave, are all brothers, and have all one Father in heaven. The wealthy is not better on that account than the needy. As boldly may the slave call God his Father as the King. We are all alike before God, unless any one excel another in good works. The rich for his wealth is not to despise the poor, for the poor is before God

often better than the rich. God is our Father, therefore should we all be brothers in God, and hold the brotherly bond unbroken; that is true peace, so that each of us love others as himself, and command to no one that which he would not another should command to him. He who observes this is a child of God, and Christ, and all holy persons who thrive to God are his brothers and his sisters."

Easter Sunday.

P. 229. "Let us believe that God the Father was ever without beginning, and that the Son was ever begotten of the Father; for He is the Wisdom and Power through which the Father hath created all creatures; and they were all quickened by the Holy Ghost Who is the Will and Love of the Father and of the Son. These Three are one God indivisible, existing in one Godhead, all equally powerful; for whatsoever is less, and less powerful, that is not God."

P. 241. "He flees not with body, but with mind" (Augustine).

Sermon on the Lord's Prayer.

P. 267. On the bread.—"The body quickly wastes away and decays, if its sustenance is withdrawn from it; in like manner the soul perishes, if it has not ghostly sustenance, that is God's commandments, on which it shall thrive and be cherished. The ghostly bread is also the holy housel, with which we confirm our belief; and through partaking of the holy housel our sins will be forgiven us, and we shall be strengthened against the temptations of the devil.

Therefore should we frequently cleanse and confirm our souls with ghostly refection."

Sermon for the First Sunday after Easter.

P. 293. In the next world.—"There will be known those who were known before, and those who were unknown, dwelling in brotherly love with God, ever to eternity."

Sermon on the Catholic Faith.

P. 293. "The Holy Father created and made mankind through His Son, and He would afterwards through the same redeem us from Hell torment, when we were undone. Without any passion He might have saved us, but that seemed to Him unjust. But the devil undid himself, when he instigated the Jewish people to the slaying of Jesus, and we were redeemed by His innocent death from the eternal death."

Sermon on the Lord's Ascension.

P. 297. "Jesus taught the holy lore, etc."—"Verily after the universal resurrection our bodies will require no strengthening of earthly meats, for Jesus will supply all our needs with heavenly things, and we shall be enriched with glory, and mighty to execute whatsoever is pleasing to us, and we shall be full swift to go through all the immensities of the Kingdom of God."

Sermon on the Ascension.

P. 309. A curious interpretation. — "He who comes to Me, may not be My disciple, unless he hate his wife."

Sermon for Pentecost.

P. 313. "The offered Lamb betokened the slaying of Christ, Who innocent was offered to His Father for our redemption. Now is His passion and His resurrection our Eastertide, because He redeemed us from the thraldom of the devil."

In same.

P. 321. The Holy Ghost as a dove, and as fire.—"For He causes those to be meek in innocence, and burning in the Will of God, whom He fills with His Grace."

Sermon for the Second Sunday after Pentecost.

P. 329. "Some men will imagine that there is no peril in precious garments, but if there were no sin, the holy gospel would not have so evidently manifested with respect to the rich man, that he was adorned with purple and fine linen. No man heeds precious garments save for vain pride, verily that he may through his splendour be accounted before other men."

Second Sunday after Pentecost.

P. 335. Painful and unloving view. — "The righteous will ever see the unrighteous suffering in their torments, that their bliss and love to their Lord may be the greater, Who rescued them from the power of the devil, and from the wicked band."

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost.

P. 349. "Who may be happy, unless he have his Creator dwelling in himself?"—"God is every-

where, though the angel be local, the Almighty Ruler is not local."

Nativity of St. John the Baptist.

P. 359. "He is called Lamb, from the innocence of the Lamb's nature, and was, guiltless, for our redemption, offered up a living sacrifice to His Father in the manner of a Lamb."

The Assumption of the Virgin.

P. 444, etc. She is here designated, "a heavenly queen," and all the host of heaven are described as welcoming her.

P. 453. "Let us call with constant prayers to the holy Mother of God, that she may intercede for us in our necessities with her Son."

Dedication of the Church of St. Michael.

P. 515. Responsibility of clergy. — "He who enters upon a holy order in God's Church, and afterwards by instigation or by sinful life gives evil example to others, and perverts their understanding, then better were it for him that he alone perished in his worldly life, than that he in holy guise should draw others with him to perdition through his depraved morals."

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost.

P. 521. How we become Christians.—"Through belief and baptism we are begotten to God, and adopted as His spiritual children, through Christ's humanity, and through grace of the Holy Ghost."

The same.

P. 529. "The marriage garment betokens the true love of God and men. . . . The Son of God, who through love came to men, signified in the gospel that which the marriage garment betokened, true love. Every one of those who with faith and baptism incline to God, comes to the marriage; but he comes not with a marriage garment, if he holds not true love."

The same (*continued*).

P. 531. "The feet which will not visit the sick, and the hands which give nothing to the poor, shall then be bound in torment, because they are now wilfully bound from good works."

The same (a prayer).

P. 539. "Lead us, Almighty God, to the number of Thy chosen saints, with the everlasting bliss of Thy kingdom, which Thou hast prepared from the beginning of the world for those who love Thee, Thou who livest and reignest with the Eternal Father and the Holy Ghost for ever and ever. Amen."

Sermon for all Saints. (An example of the Romanising doctrine.)

P. 547. "O thou blessed parent of God, ever maiden Mary."—"The example and footsteps of this maiden were followed by an innumerable body of persons in maidenhood, living in purity, renouncing marriage, etc."

Sermon on the Nativity of St. Andrew.

P. 579. "If Jesus had chosen at first eloquent teachers, and sent worldly philosophers, and the like

to preach, then would it have appeared as if the true faith had not sprung up through God's might, but from worldly eloquence. He chose fishers as He chose emperors, because it is better that the emperor, when he comes to Rome, should cast aside his crown, and kneel at the fisher's memorial, than that the fisher kneel at the emperor's memorial. Emperors He chose, but yet He ranked the indigent fisher before the rich Emperor."

The same.

P. 585. "If any one cannot obtain the means of offering a visible gift to God, let him offer an invisible one, that is good will, which incomparably excels earthly treasure. What is good will but goodness, so that he grieves for another man's misfortune, and rejoices in his prosperity; loves his friend not for the world, but for good; to bear with his foe with love, to command to no one that which he likes not himself, to help his neighbour's need according to his power, and to be willing beyond his power? What is any gift in comparison with this will, when the soul offers itself to God on the altar of its heart?"

THORPE'S TRANSLATION OF ÆLFRIC'S ANGLO-SAXON PREFACE TO VOL. II. OF *CATHOLIC HOMILIES*[1]

"I, Ælfric, the monk have turned this book from Latin books into the English tongue, for those men to read who know not Latin. I have taken it from the Holy Gospels, and treated it after the expositions of highly venerable doctors, the names of which doctors I wrote down in the former book in the

[1] See Appendix C.

Latin preface. I have set the matter which I have turned in two books, because I thought it were less tedious to hear, if the one book were read in the course of one year and the other in the year following. In each of these books there are forty discourses, without the preface, but they are not all taken from the Gospels, but are very many of them gathered from the life or passion of God's saints, of those only whom the English nation honours with feast days. Before each discourse we have set the argument in Latin, though every one who will may order the chapters according to the preface. I now pray and implore, in the name of God, if any one will transcribe this book, that he carefully rectify it by the copy, lest through negligent writers we be blamed. He does great evil who writes false, unless he rectify it, for he has brought the true doctrine to false heresy, therefore should every one correct that which he has perverted wrong, if he would be guiltless at God's doom."

Admonition; prefixed to the Second Volume of the *Catholic Homilies*

"One thing I now desire to place at the beginning of this book; not as a preface, but as an admonition; namely as to guarding against drunkenness, as the Lord in Leviticus spoke to Aaron in these words: 'Wine, and everything that can occasion drunkenness, drink not thou nor thy sons, when ye go into the tabernacle of witness, lest ye die; it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations, that ye may have knowledge to discern between the holy and the profane, between the unclean and the clean.'

"In the New Testament also the Lord admonished His disciples saying, 'Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.' So great a vice is drunkenness that Paul an Apostle and teacher of the Gentiles bears witness that drunkards cannot possess the Kingdom of God. O how blessed are they who live for God, and not for this world, for virtue, and not for vice; and though we may not be equal to following the fasts and abstinence of the holy fathers, yet we must by no means weakly yield to abominable drinkings and intoxications, after having been warned by the terrible threatenings of our Lord God. These admonitions will suffice for the teachable, for the unteachable and hard-hearted no exhortations are enough. Again I desire and pray, venerable Archbishop Sigeric, that it may be well with thee for ever in Christ."

Catholic Homilies

Sermon on the Nativity.

P. 12. "We should honour Christ's Nativity and His birthtide with ghostly joy, and adorn ourselves with good works, and busy ourselves with songs of praise to God, and shun the things which Christ forbids, which are sins and works of the devil; and love those things which God has enjoined, that is lowliness and mercy, righteousness and truth, almsdeeds and temperance, patience and chastity."

Sermon on the Epiphany.

P. 41. "The slaying of the lamb betokened the

slaying of Christ. He resisted not, nor fought more than a lamb does, but consented very patiently to be sacrificed for the sins of all the world; because unless He had suffered for us, none of us could come to the Kingdom of God."

The same (*continued*).

P. 47. "Some men are thought meek, but they are slack; they appear with mildness, but their mildness is in sooth sloth and ignorance; but the man who has not the Spirit of God in him is not of God."

The same (*continued*).

P. 49. "Three principal things has God appointed to men for purification: the one is baptism, the second is housel, the third is penance, with cessation from evil deeds and practice of good works. Baptism washes us from all sins, housel hallows us, true penance heals our misdeeds."

Second Sunday after the Epiphany.

P. 57. "The Holy Ghost is of both (that is the Father and the Son) the Love and Will, and ever with them both."

The same (*continued*).

P. 63. "In the offering of Isaac we are to perceive the Lord's Passion, of which the Apostle Paul said, that 'God the Father spared not His own Child, but gave Him to death for us all.' Isaac bare the wood for his own burning, and refused not his father's bonds; so also was Christ obedient to His Father unto death, and Himself bare His rood."

Septuagesima Sunday.

P. 77. "My brothers, what justification can we have, if we abstain from good works, we who from the child-cradle came to God's belief? . . . My brothers, behold your conduct and see if ye yet are God's workmen. Let every one consider what he does, and behold whether he labours in God's vineyard. He who in the present life toils for himself and not for God, is not yet come within God's vineyard. They truly toil for God who seek not their own gain through covetousness, but meditate on God's tillage, how they may suppress unrighteousness, and further righteousness, and benefit other men with the diligence of true love, and they who care with wakeful mind how they may gain the souls of men to God, and lead them to everlasting life. He who lives for himself, and he who lies in his fleshly lusts, is rightly accused of idleness; for he cultivates no fruit of divine work."

Second Sunday in Lent.

P. 111. "With belief pray to God's saints for their intercession."

Sermon on St. Gregory the Great.

P. 133. "Gregory also gave to Augustine holy gifts of mass-robes and books, together with the relics of the Apostles and martyrs; and commanded that his successor should always fetch the pall and the archiepiscopal dignity from the apostolic see of the Roman Church. Augustine after this established bishops from among his companions *over all the cities of the English nation*, and they have con-

tinued prospering in God's faith to this present day."[1]

This last sentence is, of course, inaccurate history.

Bishop Cuthberht.

P. 139. "Cuthberht, as was his wont, went preaching the faith, that he might teach the ignorant people the way of life, when an eagle fled before him on his journey, and he began asking his companion, who for that day should give them food? Then said his companion, that he had long been considering where they should ask for sustenance, as they had gone the journey without provisions. Then Cuthberht said to him, 'Lo, God Almighty can very easily provide food for us through this eagle, Who of yore fed Elijah through the swart raven, before he journeyed to heaven.' They then went on journeying, and lo, the eagle sat on the shore, having flown thither with a fish which he had just caught. Thereupon the saint said to his companion, 'Run to the eagle and take from him a part of the fish which he has caught, for our refection. Praise to the Almighty, Who would feed us through this bird. But give a part to the eagle in reward of his labour.'"

St. Benedict.

P. 187. "This blessed man Benedict wrote the rule of the monks with great judgment, and in

[1] This Sermon on the Festival of Pope Gregory was translated and published by Elisabeth Elstob, London, 1709. She was learned in Anglo-Saxon, but the Anglo-Saxon text is said to be corrupt which she used.

brilliant language, in which every one may know all the acts of his teachership, for the saint so lived as he taught. The blessed man was cheerful in aspect, with white hair, beautifully formed, and in mind filled with great love, so that he was dwelling in the heavenly country, although he still continued on earth."

Here follows an account of his death.

Mid-Lent Sunday.

P. 215. "Jesus heals His people of their sins, and leads them to the eternal country of the kingdom of heaven, as the leader Jesus (Joshua) led the old Israel to the country which had been promised to them."

Sermon for the Sacrifice on Easter Day.

P. 279. "Holy books enjoin that water be mixed with the wine destined for housel, because water is typical of the people, as the wine is of the Blood of Christ."

Another Sermon on Easter Day.

P. 285. "We have a twofold need in book-writing. One simple need is to consider with careful mind the written lore; the other to turn it to works. If Moses and all the prophets prophesied that Christ, through the anguish of His Passion, should pass into heavenly glory, how then can he be accounted a Christian who will not, according to the capacity of his understanding, search the book-writings, how they refer to Christ, or fail in the effort through any difficulty, to merit with Christ eternal glory."

The same (*continued*).

The walk to Emmaus.—"They then invited Him to their guest-house, and offered Him meat, and knew Him at the refection Whom they had not known when Holy Writ was being explained. They were not enlightened because they had heard the commandments of God, but they were enlightened when they turned the commandments of God to work by hospitality; for it is written that they shall not be accounted righteous with God, who without work hear His commandments, but they shall be accounted righteous, who fulfil His commandments by works."

The Finding of the Cross (close of the Homily).

P. 307. "Thus wrote Jerome, the wise expositor, concerning the holy rood, how it was found.

"'Christian men truly should bow to the hallowed rood in the name of Jesus, for although we have not that on which He suffered, its likeness is nevertheless holy, to which we ever bow in our prayers to the Mighty Lord, who suffered for men; and the rood is a memorial of His great passion, holy through Him, though it grew in a wood. We ever honour it for the honour of Christ, Who redeemed us with love through it, for which we thank Him ever in life.'"

On the greater Litany.

P. 317. "The love of God manifests itself by works, and if it is idle, then it is not love. He who loves not God loves not himself; because he will never thrive without God. But the Lord said in His preaching, 'Ye are my friends, if ye do the

things which I commanded you to observe.' It is a great mercy of the Lord Creator, that we are so benignly called our Creator's friends, if we fulfil His behest, we who were not worthy to be called His thralls, and that we have such honour through obedience. We rejoice in mind for that great honour, but we should meditate how to obtain it. Let no man, on account of enormous sins, despair of meriting that great dignity, and of being the friend of God, through good deserts, if he repeats not his former misdeeds. For sinful men Christ gave His life. Let him only despair, who endlessly sins, and before his last day makes no repentance. Let us love God with good knowledge, and also our neighbour as ourselves. God will dwell in us, if we love each other, and His true love will thus be completed in us, and we may by that alone fulfil His Law."

The same (*continued*).

P. 317. "The Holy Trinity, Which is God powerful in majesty, comes unseen to the pious heart, which is obedient to His behests in deed, and it shall be adorned through God's visitation, and enlightened by His sojourn within. Men put their houses in order, and are well content if they desire to receive a friend to them, that no impropriety may offend him, and we should cleanse ourselves from unclean deeds, that the mighty God may dwell in our minds, Who visits every one through His Spirit, and forsakes the foul, for their depravity, deprived of light, because they love Him not."

The same (*continued*).

P. 319. On Christian love.—"The guileful fiend

sows discord among mankind through divers causes, and instigates one man to desire our possessions, and inflames our minds with great anger against another who will persecute us. Then we lose, through a little wealth, true love, which is the best of wealth. But we should ever shield that true love which leads us to the living God, rather than the possessions which will perish from us. Verily our soul may not fly to the kingdom of heaven, unless it have the wings of true love of the Creator and of men, more than any bird has power of flight, if one of its wings has been previously broken."

The same (*continued*).

"Let every one now consider what befits his state, for men may, through diligence of mind, in every stage propitiate the Almighty."

The same (*continued*).

P. 321. "Bishops and mass-priests are set as criers, to announce the faith to lay people, and also to intercede for them to Almighty God; it therefore befits them to have goodness, and to be adorned with fair morals. . . .

"The priest may not intercede for men, nor even for himself, if he lie under sins, and by foul deeds make himself criminal, unless he first arise from the reeking dunghill, and with true penitence wash himself, that he may with certainty have calling on the Lord."

An interesting Legend of the Angelic World "Furseus."

P. 333. "Notice how in the other world two priests address Furseus, and advise him when re-

turning to the world again; they say . . . 'to monastic men it is fitting that they lead their lives in stillness. Do thou make known thy vision to the world, and be sometimes in privacy, and sometimes among men. When thou art in privacy, hold sedulously the commandments of God.'"

Another Vision (the Thane Drihthelm).

P. 355. A story at the end of this, from Gregory's *Dialogues*, of a man who saw many things, when his soul had been led from this life. Amongst others, he saw where they were erecting a building, all of beaten gold, and the workmen were making the building on a Saturday, and it was then nearly ended. He inquired then for whom the building, so wonderfully constructed, was designed. They told him that it was designed for a shoemaker in Rome, and also named him. After this the dead man arose, and diligently inquired about the shoemaker, how he had acted in worldly life, and it was then found that his practice was, that he wrought his work for seven days, and sold on the Saturday; then he took from his craft his sustenance, and with bounteous spirit distributed the overplus to the poor; and therefore was the building made on the day on which he usually distributed his alms.

Third Sunday after Pentecost: a Sermon on the Parable of the Feast.

P. 375. The right control of the senses.—"Immoderate curiosity is a grave sin, for we should turn our look from evil sight, our hearing from evil speech, our taste from unallowed aliments, our noses from

hurtful smells, our hands and whole body from foul and sinful contacts, if we are desirous of coming to the delicacies of the eternal refection."

P. 393. "The tempest is open temptation, and the calm is stealthy and clandestine temptation. . . . Regard not so greatly the stillness of this world, but consider thine heart, whether that be in stillness. Look that the inward wind do not cast thee down. It will be a great bliss to thee, that thou perish not in thy bliss."

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost.

P. 431. In Ezekiel "the four beasts had eyes on every side of their bodies, because God's chosen should consider their deeds beforehand on every side, so that they ever desire good, and guard themselves against evil."

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

P. 465. "Plants are tender creatures, and through wintry chill always wither; nevertheless the bounty of the Almighty adorns them with such beauteous blossoms, that they excel by their fairness all earthly colours. Neither the glorious Solomon, nor any earthly king, could get such beautiful dyeing for his garments, as the rose has, and the lily, and many other plants that appear wonderful, these plants are to-day blooming in winsomeness, and to-morrow are burnt. Why gives God to the mean herb so fair an aspect, and forbids us to be solicitous about our decoration, but because we should by simpleness and true loveliness merit the heavenly fairness and decoration, which Adam lost, because

he would, through the instigation of the devil, be greater than he was created."

The Nativity of St. Matthew.

P. 471. "God tries the heart of every man, and he who receives His visitation with good will, will be feasted within through the grace of the Holy Ghost, and God will dwell with him, if he persist in good works."

The same (*continued*).

Pharisees and Scribes.—"The Lord said to them, 'The hale need no leech, but the sick.' He that thinks he is whole is sick."

Passion of St. Matthew.

P. 479. A prayer, supposed in the legend to be offered by St. Matthew.—"God Almighty, Creator of bodies, and Inspirer of souls, Thou who despisest not any age or any condition; for Thou art of all Creator, and likewise Redeemer; preserve these Thine hand maids against all pollution, and strengthen them in holy virtues, that they with the glory-crown of eternal maidenhood may come to the pure fellowship of Thy Son Jesus Christ."[1]

On the Nativity of an Apostle.

P. 525. "Christ said, 'I have called you my friends, because I have made known unto you all things that I have heard from my Father.' What did Christ make known to His disciples but the heavenly secret, and the great joy of the everlasting life, which

[1] A beautiful prayer, but it shows the overvalue of celibacy, for the "glory of eternal maidenhood" cannot be greater than that of motherhood.

He also daily fixes in the hearts of His faithful, through inspiration of the Holy Ghost? . . .

"The Apostle said, 'Ye are saved by God's grace, through faith.' Through that grace by which the human Christ was a Child of God, through that same grace will every Christian man be chosen to God, from the beginning of his belief. Through the same Spirit through which Christ was born, through the same His chosen will be born again in Holy Baptism. Through the Holy Ghost the human Christ was void of every sin, and through the same Spirit will our sins be forgiven us."

From the same.

P. 527. Of the recognition of our dear ones.—"When God's chosen come to death, then they find an heritage. A great company of faithful friends will await us there, secure for themselves, yet anxious for our salvation. Let us therefore hasten to our country, that we may see our friends, and greet our kinsmen."

On the Nativity of several Apostles.

P. 531. "The Lord said, 'The reaping is great, and the reapers few.' This we cannot say without great sorrow. Lo, now this world is filled with priests, but nevertheless in God's reaping few of them are working."

On the Nativity of Holy Martyrs.

P. 547. "Gregory has written of a patient man, named Stephen, who forsook all worldly things, and fled from the tumult of men, and devoted himself to his prayers, dwelling in some monastery. He had

so great patience that he would thank him who did him an injury, and accounted him as his friend who inflicted on him some vexation, and every mischance he accounted as a gain to him, and held all his adversaries as his supporters. After a time, when his decease took place, many men came to him, on account of his glorious life, and some of them saw angels entering."

On the Nativity of Holy Virgins.

P. 575. The parable of the wise and foolish virgins. The conclusion of this Homily.—"We should therefore watch in our hearts, and in faith; we should watch in hope and in true love; we should watch in good works, and do without vain glory, if we do some little good, that we may go into the kingdom of heaven, with the pure bridegroom, Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with His Heavenly Father, and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen."

On the Dedication of a Church.

P. 583. "Living stones."—"In the earthly church stone lies over stone, and each bears other, so likewise in God's congregation, the believing hold up each his after-comer, by precept and patience, until the building comes to the last righteous one, and he will have no after-comer whom he may bear. But He Who holds all the building, and Whom no one bears is Jesus Christ, Who holds us all and none of us holds Him."

A Prayer at the End

"I thank the Almighty Creator with all my heart, that He has granted to me, a sinner, that to His

praise and honour, I have disclosed these two books to the English race, for the unlearned; the learned have no need of these books, because their own learning may suffice them. I say now that I will never henceforth turn gospel or gospel-expositions from Latin into English. If any one will turn more, then will I pray him, for love of God that he set his book apart from the two books that we have turned, as we trust, through God's direction. Be to Him ever glory to eternity."

The years from 991 to 994 were full of trouble from the Danes. Ælfric remarks as regards this second volume of homilies: "With sorrowful mind, distressed by the many evils received from wicked pirates, we have, lest we should be found false to our promise, completed this book." It is probable that it was finished in that terrible year, whose horrors are sufficiently indicated in the Saxon Chronicle.

CHAPTER VIII

ÆLFRIC'S THIRD SERIES OF HOMILIES

(*Lives of the Saints*,[1] vol. i.)

THE metre of Anglo-Saxon poems is well described by Stopford Brooke in his *History of English Literature*. He tells us that their metre is unlike any modern one, without rhyme, and without any fixed number of syllables. Its essential elements were accent and alliteration.

"Every verse is divided into two half verses by a pause, and has four accented syllables, while the number of unaccented syllables is indifferent. These half verses are linked together by alliteration. The two accented syllables of the first half, and one of the accented syllables in the second half, begin with the same consonant, or with vowels which were generally different one from another. This is the formal rule. But to give a greater freedom there is often only one alliterative letter in the first half verse. Here is an example of the usual form:—

"'And *d*eáw-*dr*îas: on *d*aege weortheth
Winde geondsâwen.'

'And the *d*ew-*d*ownfall: at the *d*ay-break is
Winnowed by the wind.'

[1] Skeat's Translation.

"This metre was continually varied, and was capable, chiefly by the addition of unaccented syllables, of many harmonious changes."

Ælfric was very fond of using alliteration, and the chief instance of this is afforded by the mode in which he wrote the *Lives of the Saints*.

To this work he prefixed a Latin and an English preface. The Latin one begins as follows:—

"This book have I also translated from the Latin into the usual English speech, desiring to profit others by building them up in the faith, whenever they read this narrative, as many, that is, as are pleased to study this work, either by reading or hearing it read; for I think it will not be unwelcome to the faithful. For I call to mind that in two former books I have set forth the Passions or Lives of the saints whom our nation celebrates by honouring their festival, and it has now pleased me to set forth, in this book, the Passions as well as the Lives of those saints, whom not the people at large, but the monks honour by special services. . . . Let it not be considered a fault in me, that I turn sacred narrative into our own tongue, since the request of many of the faithful shall clear me in this matter, particularly that of the governor Æthelwærd, and of my friend Æthelmær, who most highly honour my translations by their perusal of them; nevertheless I have resolved at last to desist from such labour after completing the fourth book, that I may not be regarded as too tedious."

The Anglo-Saxon preface is as follows:—

"Ælfric humbly greeteth ealdorman Æthelwærd, and I tell thee, beloved, that I have now collected in this book such Passions of the Saints as I have had leisure to translate into English, because that thou, beloved, and Æthelmær earnestly prayed me for such writings, and received them of my hands for the confirmation of your faith by means of this history which ye never had in your language before. Thou knowest, beloved, that we translated in the two former books the Passions and Lives of the saints which the English nation honoureth with festivals; now it has seemed good to us that we should write this book concerning the sufferings and lives of the saints whom monks in their offices honour amongst themselves.

"We say nothing new in this book, because it has stood written down long since in Latin books, though laymen knew it not. . . . I pray now in God's name, if any man desire to transcribe this book, that he correct it well according to the copy; and set down therein no more than we have translated. Farewell in the Lord."

Quotation upon Drunkenness

(*Lives of the Saints*, vol. i. p. 359)

"Gluttony maketh a man eat and drink before the time, or again to take too much in food or in drink. This destroyeth both soul and body, because it bringeth upon the man much sickness, and bringeth him to death through immoderate drinking; it destroyeth also the soul, because he will often sin,

when he himself knoweth not how he behaveth, by reason of his fiendish drink."

As a contrast to this he describes Temperance (in English, moderation):—

"This is that a man be moderate, and do not take too much, either in food or drink, neither take his meals before the time. Beasts eat as soon as they have it, but the discreet man ought to keep to his mealtime, and then also with discretion, observe his regular custom; thus he may overcome gluttony."

The Virtues—Patience and Spiritual Joy

(*Lives of the Saints*, vol. i. p. 361)

"In patientia vestra possidebitis animas vestras": that is, in the English speech, "In your patience ye shall verily have your souls in keeping." "The Heavenly Wisdom saith, that 'anger dwelleth in the bosom of a fool,' that is when he is too hasty; for the all-ruling Judge judgeth ever with mildness, and we ought by patience to overcome anger."

Of spiritual joy he observes that it means:—

"That a man rejoice in God, amidst the sorrows of this hard world, so that we may not be despairing in misfortunes, nor again rejoice overmuch in prosperity; and if we lose the transitory things of this world, then should we know that our dwelling is not here, but is in heaven, if we hope in God. Thither we should hasten from this distress, with spiritual joy, thus shall the sorrow be utterly overcome by our patience."

Of perseverance he remarks ("Instantia boni operis"): "It is a prolonged disgrace if our life be useless here."

BIRINUS[1]

(*Lives of the Saints*,[2] vol. ii. p. 133)

At that same time also a certain bishop
Came from the city of Rome, named Birinus,
To the King of the West Saxons, called Cynegils,
Who was yet a heathen, as was all the land of the West Saxons.
Birinus indeed came from Rome,
By desire of the Pope who was then in Rome,
And promised that he would execute God's will,
And preach to the heathen in the Saviour's Name,
And the true faith in far lands.
Then he came to Wessex, which was as yet heathen,
And converted to God the King Cynegils,
And all his people to the faith with him.
Then it happened that the faithful Oswald
The King of the Northumbrians had come to Cynegils,[3]
And took him to baptism, fain of his conversion.
Then the kings, Cynegils and Oswald
Gave to the holy Birinus the city of Dorchester,
For a bishop's see and he dwelt therein,
Exalting the praise of God, and guiding
The people in the faith by his teaching for a long time
Until he happily departed to Christ,
And his body was buried in the same city,
Until Bishop Hedda after carried his bones
To Winchester, and with honours deposited them
In the old Monastery where men honour them yet."

[1] Came to Wessex 635.

[2] See Bede, *Eccl. Hist.* book iii. chap. vii.; also W. Bright, *Early Engl. Ch. Hy.* p. 152, etc.

[3] King Oswald of Northumbria gave to Cynegils his daughter in marriage.

St. Euphrasia, vol. ii. p. 335

Some of the stories in the *Lives of the Saints* were taken from the ancient legends of the Early Church, others described the career of English Saints and Martyrs. As a specimen of the former we may abridge the history of St. Euphrasia, or Euphrosyne, born in the province of Alexandria. It affords a remarkable example of the horror of marriage which among monastic persons justified untruthfulness for the purpose of avoiding it. There was an honoured man of rank named Paphnutius who lived in the fulfilment of the commandments of God, and his wife was equally virtuous. For a long time they had no child, but at the prayer of an abbot a daughter was granted them. When she was twelve years old her mother died.

"Then the father instructed the maiden in holy writings and godly readings, and in all earthly wisdom, and her fame and wisdom and learning were known through the town."

She had many suitors; at last, one worthier than the rest was accepted by her father. Then the father took her to the abbot who had prayed for her birth, and asked his blessing on the intended marriage. They stayed several days, during which she observed the devout life of the brothers. Before they left, Paphnutius brought his daughter to receive a parting blessing from the abbot. She

fell at his feet and said, "Father, pray for me, that God may beget my soul unto Himself." Then the abbot extended his hand and blessed her and said:—

"Lord God, Thou Who knewest Adam ere he was created, vouchsafe to have care of this Thine handmaid and that she may be a partaker of the heavenly kingdom."

So after these words they returned home. And Paphnutius being friendly to monks would often ask one in and require him to bless his daughter. One day when her father was out, she had a long talk with a monk from this same monastery, who had come intending to call on Paphnutius, and questioned him about the devotions of the brothers. Noticing her earnestness the monk advised her to abstain from matrimony. "Wed thyself to Christ, Who for these transitory things can give thee the heavenly kingdom." She answered readily, and asked, "Who will cut off my hair?" So it was arranged that when her father went to the minster to see the abbot, a monk should come to prepare her for reception. Fearing that her father would find her if she entered a nunnery, she put on the clothes of a man, and so disguised, she became a monk in the monastery that her father had visited, and was called Smaragdus. She told the abbot that she was a young man, and that she had come from the King's household, and he did not

recognise her as the maiden for whose birth he had prayed, and accepted her for his brotherhood, and gave the supposed youth into the charge of an older monk for instruction. And now the father bewept his daughter and said :—

"Woe is me, my sweetest bairn, woe is me! The light of mine eyes and the comfort of my life! Who hath bereaved me of my treasures? Who hath quenched my lamp? What wolf hath seized my lamb, or what place on sea or land hath hid so royal a countenance? She was the consoler of the mourning and the rest of the wearied. Oh, thou earth! Swallow thou never my blood ere I see what hath been done with Euphrosyne, my daughter!"

And the abbot and the brothers prayed that he might find his daughter again. And one day the abbot brought the supposed young monk to talk with Paphnutius. But she was so much thinned down by the severe life, and moreover covered with her cowl over her face, that he did not know her. And they prayed together and talked and she comforted him with spiritual words about the loss of his daughter.

Thirty-eight years passed, and Smaragdus fell ill with fatal sickness. And Paphnutius came and bemoaned the loss of his daughter. Then at last, being aware that she was dying, she made herself known to him, and her spirit passed away, and he fell senseless on the floor. And after her burial Paphnutius

entered the monastery, and gave most of his possessions to it, and lived ten years in the cell where his daughter had been. And when he died they buried him beside his daughter, "and the day of their departure is honoured in the minster unto this present day; to the glory of God the Father and His only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Ghost, to Whom be glory and worship for ever and ever. Amen."

Such is the outline of the story, but no abridgment can give an idea of the vigorous and racy simplicity, or of the tender pathos of the original,[1] to which it is hoped that the reader will be induced to refer. The improbabilities of the girl not being found out in a monastery so well known to her father, and in which she had already paid visits with him to the abbot, are, of course, very obvious.

St. Swithun[2]

The miracles after the death of St. Swithun of Winchester offer us an example of the English legends, but Ælfric laments that no account was written by his contemporaries of his deeds when living, for he observes:—

"In the days of noble King Edgar,[3] when, by God's

[1] *v.* Skeat. Ælfric's *Lives of the Saints*, vol. ii. p. 335.

[2] Was buried 862.

[3] Edgar, King of England 959 to 975, previously King of Mercia and East Anglia. In Anglo-Saxon, Eadgar.

grace, Christianity was thriving well in the English nation under that same king, God by many miracles revealed St. Swithun, showing that he is illustrious. His deeds were not known before God Himself manifested them, neither have we found in books how the bishop lived in this world, before he departed to Christ. Such was their carelessness who knew him in life, that they would not write down his works and conversation for future generations who knew not his power."

By King Edgar's desire the bones of St. Swithun were taken up from their first resting-place, and carried into the church of St. Peter. This was done by Bishop Æthelwold (Ælfric's teacher) with great pomp and chanting of abbots and monks. Within ten days of this, two hundred men are stated by Ælfric to have been healed at his grave. The burial-ground lay filled with crippled folk, so that people could hardly get into the minster.

We need not follow further these stories of healing, which Ælfric evidently believed with honest credence, difficult of belief as they are to us; but a reference to Æthelwold's earnestness in keeping the monks up to their duty may not be out of place.

"Æthelwold, the venerable and blessed bishop, who in those days was bishop of Winchester, bade all his monks who dwelt in the monastery that they should all go in procession to church and with hymns praise the merits of the saint and so magnify God, because of the great saint, as often as any sick man

should be healed. Then forthwith they did so and sang the Te Deum until they all loathed to arise so often,—sometimes three, sometimes four times in a night, to sing the Te Deum when they wanted sleep, —and at last they all left off the chanting, because the bishop was busy with the King and knew not but that they sang the Te Deum continually. Behold then, the holy Swithun came in a vision, wondrously adorned, to a certain good man, and said, 'Go now to the old minster, and say to the monks, that God greatly misliketh their murmuring and sloth, in that they daily see God's wonders amongst them, and yet they will not praise Christ with chanting, even as the bishop bade the brethren do; and say, 'If they will not perform the hymn, straightway the miracles shall soon cease; and if they will sing the Te Deum at the miracles, as often as sick men shall thus be made whole, then shall so many miracles be done amongst them, that no man shall be able to remember in his lifetime that any one hath seen such miracles anywhere.' Then the man arose out of that winsome sleep and greatly lamented that he could not see, nor any longer enjoy the bright light which he had seen around Swithun. He arose nevertheless and very quickly went to Bishop Æthelwold and told him all this; Æthelwold thereupon sent immediately to the monks from the King's court and bade that they should sing the Te Deum, even as he had appointed, and he that neglected it should heavily atone for it, by fasting for seven days continuously. Thenceforth they ever observed this custom as we ourselves have often seen, and have not seldom sung this hymn with them."

With reference to the miracles alleged to have been effected through the intercession of Swithun, Ælfric utters a warning, as he does elsewhere also, which shows the doctrine of the Church at that time, observing:—

"We must not pray to God's saints as to God Himself, because He alone is God, and above all things; but we should truly pray the saints to intercede for us with the All-ruling God, Who is their Lord, that He may help us."

Judas Maccabeus

(*Lives of the Saints*, vol. ii. p. 103, etc.)

"Eupator, Antiochus' son, gathered his army far and near, and sent a hundred thousand of marching men and twenty thousand of mounted men, and thirty elephants, all tamed and trained to war. Five hundred mounted men went with each elephant, and on each elephant was a war-house built, and in each war-house were thirty men, fighting with craft and going with eagerness. To some men it will seem strange to hear this, because that elephants have never come to England. An elephant is an immense beast, greater than a house, all surrounded with bones within the skin, except at the navel, and he never lies down. Three hundred years they live, if they be not crippled, and man may tame them wonderfully for battle. The whale is of all fishes the greatest, and the elephant is of all beasts the greatest, but nevertheless man's skill may tame them.

"The heathen then went to the battles swiftly and with mulberries emboldened the elephants, because that mulberries[1] are to them the pleasantest of food. There was a very terrible army of the heathen men, but nevertheless Judas went against them with war, and slew there soon six hundred men, and one of his comrades, Eleazar, he hight, ran to an elephant that was the most excellent there, weened that the King was in the war-house that he bare. He ran with drawn sword through the midst of the band, and slew even on both sides, so that they fell dying, until he came to the elephant and went under him, pricked him then at the navel, so that they both lay there, each one the other's slayer; and Judas afterwards returned into Jerusalem with all his army and they defended themselves keenly against the attacking host, until the King instituted peace with them, by his counsellors' advice, but he quickly brake it. He turned then homeward with the remnant of his army and soon a victorious thane slew him, named Demetrius, and possessed his kingdom in the city Antioch, and everywhere thereabout."

P. 111. Death of Judas. Only eight hundred men are prepared to support him, but he says, "Let it never happen in our lives that we lay aside our glory with slothful flight, but let us fight against them, and if God so fore-ordain, we shall die in our might,

[1] In 1 *Maccabees* vi. 34 we read: 'To the end they might provoke the elephants to fight, they showed them the blood of grapes and mulberries."

for our brethren, without shameful flight." He is killed, and his brothers brought his body out of the carnage and buried it in Modin beside Mattathias his father, and all the people mourned him in the ancient manner.

P. 115. The people of Israel then unanimously chose Jonathan, his brother, praying that he would be their head and their leader against the heathen people; and he took the leadership, as they all prayed him, and defended them many years against the invading army. . . .

"Jonathan dwelt in worship a long while, and kings honoured him with words and gifts, and he obtained victory in many battles, and ever was contending concerning God's will, and eke gave up his life for his people's defence. Simon then afterwards prudently protected the Jewish country after Jonathan his brother, and in all his days no man harmed them, but they ever dwelt in peace in Simon's day, until that he at last was also slain, even as his brothers, for true worship and for their people's defence, but they live to eternity with the patriarchs, for their fidelity towards God."

John was chosen, the son of Simon (1 *Macc.* xvi. 21), who was, after his father, the people's leader, and gloriously protected them against the heathen people, throughout all his life, and defended the land.

"Greater is now the struggle of the monks against the invisible devils that lay snares around us, than

may be that of the worldly men that struggle against fleshly foes, and visible fight against the visible enemies. . . . God's servants ought to preserve their harmlessness, even as Christ set the example through Himself, when He commanded Peter to hide his sword, and healed by his might the man's ear, that Peter cut off, and manifested His goodness. Now the monk that submits to Benedict's rule and leaves all worldly things, why will he again return to worldly weapons and cast aside his struggle against the invisible enemies, to vex his Creator?"

The servant of God may not fight along with worldly men, if he is to have success in the spiritual combat. There was no holy servant of God after the Saviour's passion that would ever defile his hands with fighting; but they bore the persecution of impious tormentors, and gave up their lives with harmlessness for God's belief, and they now live with God, because they would not even put to death a bird.

One of the lessons drawn by Ælfric from the story of the Maccabees is as follows:—

"Christ at His coming taught us another thing,
And bade us hold peace and truthfulness ever;
And we ought to strive against the cruel enemies,
That is the invisible ones, and the deceitful devils,
That wish to slay our soul with vices.
Against them we should strive with ghostly weapons,
And pray for protection for us, continually of Christ,
That we may overcome the cruel iniquities,
And the devil's enticements, that he may not harm us.

Then shall we be God's champions, in the spiritual battle,
If we despise the devil, through true belief,
And the chief vices, through self-control,
And if we perform God's will with our works.
The ancient people of God had to fight them with weapons,
And their contest was a type of that of holy men,
Who drive away vices and devils from them."

June 22. Passion of St. Alban, Martyr[1]

(*Lives of the Saints*, vol. i. p. 415)

"There was a heathen emperor named Diocletian,
who was chosen to be emperor over all the earth,
though he was a destroyer of men, two hundred
and eighty-six years after Christ's Incarnation;
and he reigned twenty years, a cruel murderer,
so that he killed, and bade kill,
all the Christians whom he could find out,
and burned churches, and robbed the innocent;
and this impious persecution spread unceasingly
over all the earth fully ten years,
until it came also even to England,
and there killed many who believed in Christ.
One of these was Alban, the noble martyr,
who was likewise killed in that persecution
for Christ's faith, even as we shall tell (you) here.
In those days came the murderous persecution
to England from the wicked emperor,
and the murderers seized the Christians everywhere
with exceeding fury; then a priest escaped from them
who ran secretly to Alban's house,
and there lay hid from his fierce persecutors,
and Alban received him, though he was not baptized.
Then began the priest, forasmuch as he loved God,
to sing his offices, and fast strictly,
and day and night to praise his Lord,

[1] A.D. 305. Bede, *Eccl. History*, book i. chap. vii.

and meanwhile to teach the true faith
to the honourable Alban, until he believed
in the true God, and renounced heathenism,
and became verily a Christian, and exceeding full of faith.
Then the priest dwelt with the honourable man
until the magistrate who persecuted the Christians
discovered him there, and with great wrath
commanded him to be fetched before him speedily.
Then came the messengers to Alban's house,
but Alban went out unto the persecutors
with the priest's cloak, as if he were *he*,
and would not betray him to the wicked persecutors.
He was thereupon bound, and brought straightway
to the impious judge, where he was offering to his gods
the devilish sacrifices, with all his associates.
Then became the judge fiendishly angry,
as soon as he beheld the steadfast martyr,
because he had received the fugitive priest,
and given himself up to be slain for him.
Then he bade men lead him to the heathen sacrifice, and said
that he himself should receive the heavy punishment
which he had meant for the priest if he could have taken him,
unless he quickly submitted to his shameful gods;
but Alban was not affrighted by his fiendly threats,
because he was girded about with God's weapons
unto the ghostly fight, and said that he would not
obey his host, nor bow to his idolatry.
Then asked the judge immediately, and said
'Of what family art thou, or of what rank among men?'
Then Alban answered the wicked man thus:
'What concerneth it thee, of what family I may be?
but if thou desire to hear the truth, I tell thee quickly
that I am a Christian, and will ever worship Christ.'
The judge said to him: 'Tell me thy name,
without any delay, now that I thus ask.'
The champion of God said to the murderer thus,
'I am hight Albanus, and I believe in the Saviour,
Who is the true God, and made all creatures;
to Him I pray, and Him will I ever worship.'

The murderer answered the glorious man,
'If thou wilt have the felicity of the everlasting life,
then thou must not delay to sacrifice
to the great gods, with full submission.'
Alban answered him: 'Your sacrifices to the gods,
which ye offer to devils, cannot help you,
nor profit your cause, but ye shall receive as your meed
everlasting punishments in the wide-reaching hell.'
Lo! then the judge became fiendishly irate,
and commanded men to scourge the holy martyr,
weening that he might bend the steadfastness of his mind
to his (own) forms of worship by means of the stripes;
but the blessed man was strengthened by God,
and bore the scourging exceeding patiently,
and with glad mind thanked God for it.
Then the judge perceived that he could not overcome
the holy man by the severe tortures,
nor turn (him) from Christ, and commanded them to kill him
by decapitation, for the Saviour's name.
Then the heathen did as the judge commanded them,
and led the Saint unto his beheading;
but they were delayed a long while at a bridge,
and stood still until evening by reason of the exceeding crowd
of men and of women who were stirred up,
and came to the martyr, and went with him.
So then it fell out that the unbelieving judge
sat unfed in the town until evening,
without any meal, fasting against his will.
Lo! then Alban would hasten to death,
and went to the stream when he could not go over the bridge,
and looked up to heaven, praying to the Saviour,
and the stream thereupon dried up before him,
and made a broad way for him, even as he had desired of God.
Then the executioner, who was to kill him,
was touched by that miracle, and threw away his sword,

and ran quickly, as soon as they had come over the stream,
and fell at his feet with full faith,
desiring to die with him rather than to slay him.
He was then united, with resolute faith,
to the holy man whom he was to have beheaded;
and the sword lay there shining before them,
and not one of them would readily slay him.
Then was there nigh at hand to the holy man
a pleasant hill, adorned with plants,
with all fairness, and eke full smooth.
Then went Alban quickly thither,
and straightway prayed God that He would give him water
upon the hill, and He did so.
Then ran the well-spring at Alban's feet,
That men might understand his power with God,
when the stream ran from the steep hill.
He was then beheaded for the Saviour's name,
upon the hill, and departed to his Lord
by victorious martyrdom, and with true faith;
but his slayer might not live in full health,
because that both his eyes burst out of him,
and fell to the earth with Alban's head,
that he might understand whom he had killed.
They beheaded afterward the faithful soldier
who would not behead the holy man,
and he lay beside Alban, believing in God,
baptized with his blood, and departed to Heaven.
Afterward, when the executioners came to their lord,
and related the wonderful signs which Alban had wrought,
and how he was blinded who had beheaded him,
then he bade them stay the persecution, and spake reverently
of the holy martyrs, whom he could not turn
from God's faith by the terrible torments.
In that same persecution were [also] slain
Aaron and Julius, and many others,

both of men and women, widely throughout England,
killed by tortures for Christ's faith,
and they departed victoriously to the true life.
Then the persecution ceased, and the Christians came
out of the woods, and out of the wastes, where they had
been hidden,
and went amongst men, and restored Christianity,
and repaired churches that were wholly ruined,
and dwelt there in peace with true faith.
Then they built likewise a worthy church
to the holy Alban, where he was buried,
and there frequently were miracles performed
to the praise of the Saviour Who liveth ever in eternity.
This was done before that strife came
through Hengest and Horsa who defeated the Britons,
and Christianity was again dishonoured,
until Augustine re-established it,
according to the instruction of Gregory, the faithful Pope.
Be glory and praise to the benevolent Creator,
Who delivered our fathers from their foes,
and disposed them to baptism by means of His preachers.
Amen."

Nov. 20. Passion of Saint Edmund,[1] King and Martyr[2]

(*Lives of the Saints*, vol. ii. p. 314)

"A certain very learned monk came from the South, over the sea, from Saint Benedict's Stow, in the days of King Æthelred, to Archbishop Dunstan, three years before he died, and the monk was called Abbo. Then they were in conversation till Dunstan told him about saint Edmund, even as Edmund's

[1] A.D. 870.

[2] Skeat tells us that Ælfric derived the life of St. Edmund from Abbo of Fleury.

sword-bearer told it to King Æthelstan, when Dunstan was a young man and the sword-bearer a very old man. Then the monk put all this story in a book, and afterwards, when the book had come to us, within a few years, we turned it into English just as it stands here-after. This monk Abbo within two years went home to his minster, and was almost immediately appointed abbot in that same minster.

"Edmund the blessed, king of the East Angles,
was wise and honourable, and ever glorified,
by his excellent conduct, Almighty God.
He was humble and devout, and continued so steadfast
that he would not yield to shameful sins,
nor in any direction did he bend aside his practices,
but was always mindful of the true doctrine—
'(If) thou art made a chief man, exalt not thyself,
but be amongst men as one of them.'
He was bountiful to the poor, and to widows even like
a father,
and with benignity guided his people
ever to righteousness, and controlled the violent,
and lived happily in the true faith.
Then at last it befell that the Danish people
came with a fleet, harrying and slaying
widely over the land, as their custom is.
In that fleet were their chief men,
Hingwar and Hubba, associated by the devil,
and they landed in Northumbria with their ships,
and wasted the land and slew the people.
Then Hingwar turned eastward with his ships,
and Hubba was left in Northumbria,
having won the victory by means of cruelty.
Then Hingwar came rowing to East Anglia
in the year when Ælfred the ætheling was one and twenty
years old,

he who afterward became the renowned king of the West-Saxons.
And the aforesaid Hingwar suddenly, like a wolf,
stalked over the land and slew the people,
men and women, and witless children,
and shamefully tormented the innocent Christians.
Then soon afterward he sent to the king
a threatening message, that he must bow down
to do him homage, if he recked of his life.
So the messenger came to king Edmund,
and speedily announced to him Hingwar's message.
'Hingwar our king, keen and victorious
by sea and by land, hath rule over many peoples,
and has landed here suddenly even now with an army,
that he may take up his winter-quarters here with his host.
Now he commandeth thee to divide thy secret treasures
and thine ancestors' wealth quickly with him,
and thou shalt be his under-king, if thou desire to live,
because thou hast not the power that thou mayst withstand him.'
So then king Edmund called a bishop
who was handiest to him, and consulted with him
how he should answer the savage Hingwar.
Then the bishop feared for this terrible misfortune,
and for the king's life, and said that it seemed best to him
that he should submit to that which Hingwar bade him.
Then the king kept silence and looked on the ground,
and said to him at last even like a king:
'Behold, thou bishop, the poor people of this land
are brought to shame, and it were now dearer to me
that I should fall in fight against him who would possess
my people's inheritance.' And the bishop said,
'Alas, thou dear king, thy people lie slain,
and thou has not sufficient forces with which thou mayest fight,
and these seamen will come and will bind thee alive,
unless thou save thyself by yielding to him.'
Then said Edmund the king, full brave as he was:
'This I desire and wish in my mind,

that I should not be left alone after my dear thanes,
who even in their beds, with their bairns and their wives,
have by these seamen been suddenly slain.
It was never my custom to take to flight,
but I would rather die, if I must,
for my own land; and almighty God knoweth
that I will never turn aside from His worship,
nor from His true love, whether I die or live.'
After these words he turned to the messenger
whom Hingwar had sent to him, and said to him undismayed:
'Verily thou wouldest now be worthy of death,
but I will not defile my clean hands
with thy foul blood, because I follow Christ,
Who hath so given us an example, and I will blithely
be slain by you, if God hath so ordained.
Depart now very quickly, and say to thy cruel lord;
Edmund the king will never bow in life to Hingwar
the heathen leader, unless he will first bow,
in this land, to Jesus Christ with faith.'
Then went the messenger quickly away,
and met on the way the bloodthirsty Hingwar
with all his army hurrying to Edmund,
and told that wicked man how he was answered.
Hingwar then arrogantly commanded his troops
that they should, all of them, take the king alone,
who had despised his command, and instantly bind him.
Then Edmund the king, when Hingwar came,
stood within his hall mindful of the Saviour,
and threw away his weapons, desiring to imitate
Christ's example, Who forbade Peter
to fight with weapons against the bloodthirsty Jews.
Then those wicked men bound Edmund,
and shamefully insulted him, and beat him with clubs,
and afterward they led the faithful king
to an earth-fast tree, and tied him thereto
with hard bonds, and afterwards scourged him
a long while with whips, and ever he called,
between the blows, with true faith,

on Jesus Christ; and then the heathen
because of his faith were madly angry,
because he called upon Christ to help him.
They shot at him with javelins as if for their amusement,
until he was all beset with their shots,
as with a porcupine's bristles, even as Sebastian was.
When Hingwar, the wicked seaman,
saw that the noble king would not deny Christ,
but with steadfast faith ever called upon Him,
then he commanded men to behead him, and the heathen did so.
For while he was yet calling upon Christ,
the heathen drew away the saint, to slay him,
and with one blow struck off his head;
and his soul departed joyfully to Christ.

. . . . . .

Worthy is the place for the sake of the venerable saint
that men should venerate it, and well provide it
with God's pure servants, to Christ's service,
because the saint is greater than men may imagine.
The English nation is not deprived of the Lord's saints,
since in English land lie such saints
as this holy king, and the blessed Cuthbert,
and saint Æthelthryth in Ely, and also her sister,
incorrupt in body, for the confirmation of the faith.
There are also many other saints among the English,
who work many miracles, as is widely known,
to the praise of the Almighty in Whom they believed.
Christ showeth to men, through His illustrious saints,
that He is Almighty God Who causeth such wonders,
though the miserable Jews altogether denied Him,
because they are accursed, as they desired for themselves.
There are no wonders wrought at their sepulchres,
because they believe not in the living Christ;
but Christ manifesteth to men where the true faith is,
since He worketh such miracles by His saints
widely throughout the earth; wherefore to Him be Glory
ever with His Heavenly Father, and with the Holy Ghost,
for ever and ever. Amen."

King Cnut endowed and established a monastery at Bury St. Edmund's, in place of the secular church that had previously existed there, and in expiation of the martyrdom of which the Danes had been guilty.

CHAPTER IX

ÆLFRIC'S *LIFE OF ÆTHELWOLD*

Preface

"Ælfric, Abbot, a scholar of Winchester, salutes in Christ the honourable Bishop Kenulfus, and the brethren of Winchester. I have eventually thought it desirable to commit to memory some of the doings of our Father and noble teacher Æthelwold, now that twenty years have elapsed since his departure; and to give a short narration, even if it be in rustic words. I also add in this account what I learnt about him from the faithful when I was with you, as I am anxious that these things should not be altogether given over to oblivion."

St. Athelwold or Æthelwold

"The parents of St. Æthelwold were residents in the city of Winchester, and lived in the days of Edmund King of the English, being honoured with a remarkable gift from God, in that they had deserved to give birth to such a son, through whose example not only the people of the present age, but those who shall come after, might have been preserved from the darkness of error. Therefore his fortunate mother,

while the babe was yet in her womb, had the following dream, a presage of future results.

"It seemed to her that she was sitting in front of the doors of her house, and she saw a lofty banner, the top of which appeared to touch the heavens, and this, bending down, surrounded the pregnant woman to her honour with its threads. Again, upon falling asleep in that same night, she saw as it were a golden eagle, coming forth out of her mouth and flying away, so large that the whole city seemed to be overshadowed by its golden wings.

"Of these dreams, as the event proved, we can guess the meaning easily. We understand by the lofty banner that her son, whom she bore in her womb, would be a standard-bearer of the army of God, as indeed he was; and by the golden eagle that he would be a remarkable man, as the Lord saith in the Gospel, 'Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.'

"On another occasion, when the mother was standing in the church, crowded with townspeople to hear Mass, she felt that the soul of the boy, whom she bore in her womb, came and entered into him; as afterwards the holy man himself, who was then to be born, when a bishop, related to us with rejoicing. Whence it is evident that he had been a chosen one of God even before he was born, and that the soul of a man does not come from his father or his mother, but is given to each by God alone.

"When the infant was born, his parents called him Æthelwold, when he received the ablution of Holy Baptism. For it happened upon a certain day of solemnity, while the mother was sitting at home

and holding the infant in her lap, that a storm of wind arose, so that she was unable to go to the church as she had intended, but, when with groans she had given herself to prayer, she suddenly found herself sitting in the church with her baby where the presbyter was celebrating Mass.

"So the boy grew, and in his boyhood he was already occupied in sacred studies. And when he became a young man, his reputation spreading, he became known to Æthelstan, the King, the son of Edward, and was for a long time one of his retinue, being of quick intelligence, and he learnt many things that were useful to him from the wise councillors of the King. After a while, at the desire of the King, he was tonsured and consecrated to the priesthood by Ælphege, Bishop of Winchester.

"Now Ælphege himself was full of the spirit of prophecy, and it happened that he was ordaining at the same time Dunstan and Æthelwold, and a man named Ætelstane, who afterwards abandoned the monastic habit and remained an apostate to the end of his life. When Mass was over, Bishop Ælphege said to those around him, 'To-day I have consecrated three priests, of whom two will reach the episcopal dignity, one in my seat, the other in a different diocese.' Then Ætelstane said, 'Am I one of the two who are to attain the honour of episcopacy?' 'Not so,' said Ælphege, 'nor wilt thou abide in the holiness wherewith thou hast begun.' And thus it turned out with him.

"Æthelwold, being much improved by the teaching and the example of Ælphege, who had ordained him, and with whom he carefully remained for a while, as

the King commanded, came afterwards to Glastonbury and gave himself over to the discipleship of that magnificent man Dunstan, who was abbot of the monastery, and having profited much by his training, he at length received from Dunstan the garb of the monastic order, being with lowly devotion given to observe its rule. There he learnt the art of the grammarian, and the laws of metre, and the holy books and authors; devoting himself only too much to fasting and prayer, and taming himself by abstinence, and constantly exhorting the brethren to rise to lofty and difficult heights.

"A good while after he had taken up the office of a monk he made up his mind to go abroad, to deepen his knowledge of sacred books, and of monastic discipline, but the venerable Queen Eadgifu, mother of King Eadred, opposed his purpose, advising the King not to permit so valuable a man to go out of his kingdom. King Eadred was then pleased, at the suggestion of his mother, to give the venerable man Æthelwold a certain locality called Abingdon, in which from old days there had been a small monastery, but which then lay destitute and neglected, consisting of poor buildings and possessing only 40 mansæ; the rest of the land in that place (one hundred hides) being owned by the King in right of the crown. So it came about that, with the consent of Dunstan, and according to the King's desire, Æthelwold undertook the charge of the place, with a view to establish in it monks who would serve God under rule (the Benedictine rule). As servant of God he settled there, and certain clerics from Glastonbury followed him, namely Osgar, Foldbircht, Frithegar, and

Ordbircht of Winchester, and Eadric of London, submitting themselves to his discipleship, and he gathered round him in a short space of time a flock of monks over whom, by the command of the king, he was appointed abbot.

"Moreover the King gave the royal estate which he owned in Abingdon (that is a hundred hides) with its excellent buildings, to the abbot and brethren to add to their daily provision, and he assisted them much with money, but his mother did so with still greater liberality. The King came to the monastery on a certain day, that he might himself arrange the plan of the buildings, and he measured all the foundations of the monastery with his own hand, in accordance with what he had decided for the walls, and the abbot invited him and his attendants to the guest chamber to dinner. To this the King immediately consented, and there happened to be not a few with him, who had come from the people of Northumberland, and they all proceeded to the entertainment with the King. He was very merry, and ordered that plenty of mead should be set before the guests, and the doors to be shut to prevent any one shirking his drink, and so deserting the rules of the feast. What need of many words? the servants drew the liquor all day long in sufficiency for the guests, and yet it could not be exhausted, there being the depth of a hand left in the cask, when the Northumbrians went home in the evening, as drunk as swine.

"But the abbot did not build the edifice assigned to him in the days of Eadred the King, for he soon died, but in the reign of Eadgar he erected and

completed a church and dedicated it in honour of the holy Mother of God, and ever Virgin. This can be better shown by the sight of it, than by word.

"About this time Dunstan was chosen Bishop of Winchester, and after some years he was made Archbishop of Canterbury, and abode in Kent thirty and seven years, an immovable pillar in doctrine, and remarkable for his teaching and almsgiving. We have heard that miracles are often wrought at his tomb.

"Æthelwold moreover sent Osgar the monk over sea to the monastery of St. Benedict at Fleury, that he might there learn the customs of the rule, and might show and teach them to the brethren at home. For he desired himself to follow the regular pattern of the rule, and to avoid any wanderings from it, that he might lead the flock committed to him to the promised home-land. There was in the said Society a certain brother, named Ælfstan, a man of great simplicity and readiness to obey, whom the abbot had ordered to provide the food for the work-people of the monastery; and he had given himself up to this humble service with the utmost devotedness. He cooked the meat every day and distributed it to the workmen, he lighted the fire and carried the water, and washed the vessels after their use, himself, while the abbot thought that he performed this with the help of a servant. And it happened one day, when the abbot was going round the monastery, as his custom was, that he saw this brother standing near the heated kitchen, preparing the victuals for the workmen, and on entering he observed all the vessels to be extremely clean, and

the floor swept, and he said to him with a joyful countenance, 'O my brother, you have stolen this obedience from me, which without my knowledge you are exercising, but if you are such a soldier of Christ as you appear to be, put your hand into the boiling water, and bring up a crust from those at the bottom.' He at once without delay, putting his hand to the bottom of the cauldron, brought up a hot crust, feeling nothing of the heat of the boiling water. When the abbot saw this, he ordered that the crust should be put aside, and that nothing should be told to any man living. We have heard that this brother was afterwards made our abbot, and since then we have certainly seen him Bishop of the Church of Winchester.

"Æthelwold was a great builder, both when he was an abbot and when he became a bishop; hence the common enemy laid snares for him, and one day when he was working at the building, a huge post fell upon him, and knocked him down into a pit, and broke nearly all his ribs on one side, and had not the pit received him, he would have been entirely crushed. But he recovered from this misfortune, with the help of God, and Eadgar the most fortunate King of the English chose him for the bishopric of the church of Winchester, before the church above-mentioned was dedicated, and at the desire of the king, Dunstan Archbishop of Canterbury consecrated him. At that time there were in the old monastery (at Winchester) clergy of bad morals,[1] beset with

[1] See Dean Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops*, vol. i. p. 429. The Dean offers a vigorous defence of the married clergy, and condemns

pride, arrogance, and self-indulgence, so much so that many of them disdained to celebrate the Masses in the proper order, putting away their wives, whom they had married contrary to law, and taking others, being constantly given to greediness and intemperance. The holy man Æthelwold could not endure this, and obtaining the sanction of King Eadgar he very quickly drove out these abominable blasphemers of God from the monastery, and bringing in monks from Abingdon he placed them here, being himself abbot and bishop over them. It happened then that the monks who had come from Abingdon were standing at the entrance to the church, and the clerks were inside, finishing the Mass and singing the Communion Service, 'Serve the Lord in fear and rejoice unto Him with reverence,[1] accept discipline, lest the Lord should be angry, etc,' as if they said, 'We are unwilling to serve God, or to hold to this discipline; do you at least fulfil this, lest you perish like us.' Hearing this in their chant, the monks said to each other, 'Why do we delay outside? Behold we are exhorted to enter.' Moreover the King sent one of his most renowned attendants, Wulfstan by name, who by the royal authority bade the clergy either give place to the monks without delay, or accept the monastic habit. But they, hating the monastic life, went out of the church at

Æthelwold's action. He may be right, for a victorious party is not likely to speak fairly of the faults of the defeated.

[1] Kirkpatrick, *Cambridge Bible*, renders "embrace instruction," or "obedience"; so the LXX, "lay hold of instruction." This quotation is taken from the Latin Vulgate, Ps. ii. 12, where our A.V. reads: "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry." The German commentator, Delitzsch, takes it as "Kiss the Son."

once; yet afterwards three of them were converted to the life of regulars, namely Eadrin, Wulfain, and Wuilstan. For at that time there had been no monks in England except at Glastonbury and Abingdon.

"Eventually from the ill-will of the clerks, it happened that poison was given to the bishop when he was dining with his guests in his hall, they thinking that when he was dead they could enjoy their former vices. Now it was his habit, on account of his weak health, after three or four mouthfuls to take a moderate sip; he drank without knowing that poison had been brought to him, and swallowed all the contents of the cup. Immediately his face turned pale, and his bowels were greatly tormented by the force of the poison. Then he rose up, with difficulty getting from the table to his bed, and the poison ran through all his limbs, threatening death. But after awhile he began to remonstrate with himself, saying to his soul, 'Where is now thy faith? Where are the words of Christ, in which He said, If they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them?' With this and the like words the faith kindled in him extinguished the deadliness of the draft that he had swallowed, and he soon rose up, and went back to the hall cheerfully enough, inflicting no punishment on his poisoner.

"After that Æthelwold expanded his wings, and (with the consent of the King Eadgar) he drove out the clergy from the New monastery (at Winchester) and appointed Æthelgar his disciple as abbot, and under him monks that lived by the rule, and Æthelgar was subsequently made Archbishop in Kent.

"At Abingdon he made Osgar abbot, and the monastery was enriched by 600 hides or more. Also for a nunnery he consecrated sisters, and placed Ætheldrith over them as Mother.

"There was a situation in a region called Ely, very much ennobled by the relics and miracles of Æthelthryth, virgin and saint, and of her sisterhood; but it was at that time desolate, and belonged to the King's treasury. Æthelwold bought this of the King, and established there a good many monks, over whom he placed as Father a disciple of his named Brithnode, and he enriched the place more abundantly with buildings and land. Another locality he also acquired from the King and the nobles of the land, situate on the bank of the river Nen, which of old used to be called in the tongue of the English Medehamstede, and now is known as Burh, and there he brought together monks in the same way, placing over them Adulf, who later on obtained the archiepiscopate of the city of York. He also obtained a third locality by paying for it, near the aforesaid river, called Thorney in English, which he handed over to monks under the same conditions, and when the monastery had been built he appointed a man named Godman to be abbot, and gave ample possessions to the brotherhood.

"Moreover, Æthelwold was a privy councillor of King Eadgar, and nobly efficient both in word and deed. Everywhere he preached the Gospel of Christ, according to the exhortation of Isaiah the prophet, 'Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.' His preaching

was much assisted by St. Swithin, whose body had then been taken up for re-interment (*eodem tempore relevatus*), for what Æthelwold brought out in his teaching was wonderfully adorned by St. Swithin and his miracles. Thus it came about, with the consent of the King, partly by the counsel and action of Dunstan, and partly through Æthelwold, that monasteries were establised everywhere among the English, both of monks and nuns, living under the rule, and with abbots and abbesses set over them.

"Æthelwold used to go round visiting each of the monasteries instituting good customs, admonishing the obedient, and correcting the foolish with scourging; and he was terrible as a lion to the disobedient and undisciplined, but to the gentle and humble he was milder than a dove. He was a father to the monks and nuns, a comforter to widows, a succourer to the poor, a defender of churches, a corrector of the wandering, for he accomplished more by his work than we are able to relate in words. He was often troubled by illness, in his bowels and in his legs, and had sleepless nights from pain, and in the day, though looking pale, he went about like a man who was well. He made little use of the meat of fourfooted animals or of birds, except at one time for a period of three months, compelled by his great weakness and at the bidding of Dunstan, the archbishop, and again in the illness of which he died.

"It was a pleasure to him to be occupied in teaching young men and boys, and to render books into English for them, and to exhort them with humorous talk to rise to better things. Hence it came about that many of his disciples became abbots

or bishops among the English. It happened on a time that a certain clerk who had been appointed to carry a flask for oil took less oil than was required, and even this with the flask he lost on the way. The bishop arriving at the appointed place, found nothing for the chrism when he wanted it. The clerk, distressed, went back whither he had come and found the flask lying full of oil, though it had not been half full before.

"A certain monk, living under him, named Eadwin, moved by a diabolical instinct, stole the purse of a guest, and the bishop, speaking to all the brotherhood in the chapter, said that if any one had taken it, he should return it with his blessing, or place it where it would be found. After three days had passed, the money not being found, the bishop spoke to all the brothers, saying, 'Our thief would not return the stolen thing with a blessing, as we commanded, now let him return it with a malediction, and let him be bound, not only in soul, but also in body, by our authority. Why more?' The brethren said 'Amen,' and behold, there was the thief sitting miserably bound, his arms fastened to him under his cope, and he remained thus stupefied till the third hour, wondering what he should do. Yet all his other members he could move, excepting the arms, which the bishop, by the authority given him of God, had rendered useless. So the miserable man rose up bound, and following the bishop as if driven to do so, he confessed that he had the purse and had kept it secretly, but he did not mention that his arms were bound. Then the bishop said to him gently, as he was wont to speak, you have done well,

at least, now, by confessing your fault, though late; you have my blessing, and immediately his arms were loosed, the bishop not being aware of it. But he going out joyfully, told in detail of his being bound and loosed to a brother named Wulfgar, who bade him the rather to hold his tongue about it.

"When the bishop made a great effort to restore the old church and ordered the brothers to be often helping the workmen in their labour, it happened one day while the brothers were standing on the summit of the roof with the masons, that a monk fell, named Godus, from the top to the bottom. As soon as he had touched the ground he rose up, having suffered nothing from such a fall, and went up again to the work where he had before stood, and taking up a trowel finished what he had begun. To what cause is this miracle to be ascribed, unless it be to him by whose orders he went out to this work?

"A certain monk, named Theodoric, went to the bishop in the middle of the night, desiring by signs to inform him as to some necessary matter, and he found him reading with a candle, and sharpening up his aged eyelids with watchful activity; and the monk stood for a long time admiring the way in which he kept his eyes upon the page. Then the bishop rose up from his reading, and the brother took the candle to try whether he could as diligently sharpen up his healthy eyes for the reading, as the bishop had done his darkening sight. But this rash proceeding did not turn out without punishment for him, for on the following night a person, unknown to him by sight, appeared to him, saying to him with terrible threatening, 'How is it that thou hast dared

to approach the bishop in the past night when he was reading?' And saying this he struck the brother a blow on his eyes with his finger, which pained him for many days, until by making satisfaction he had wiped out the fault that he had incautiously committed against the holy man.

"Moreover it happened that as the bishop was reading at night, in spite of his efforts to watch, he fell asleep, and the lighted candle fell on the page, and burnt, as it lay on it, until a brother coming in, took the burning candle off the book, and found the sparks lying on many of the lines inside the book, and blowing these out he found the page uninjured.

"I must candidly confess that it is not easy for me to tell how many things, or what kind of things, the holy Æthelwold patiently suffered on behalf of monks, and with monks, and how benign he was to the studious and obedient, or how he laboured for the building of the monastery, repairing the church, and building other houses, or how carefully he kept vigil for prayer, and how gently he urged the brethren to confession.

"But from these few words many things may be imagined that we cannot narrate. He died in the twenty-second year of his episcopate, on the Kalends of August, when Æthelred was King of the English, and he was buried in the church of the blessed Peter and Paul, which belonged to his episcopal seat. We have heard that miracles were wrought at his tomb, both before his bones were taken up from his grave, and afterwards, as to which I mention only two for brevity.

"There was a certain Oxford citizen named Ælfelm,

who had the misfortune of blindness for many years. He was warned in his sleep to betake himself to the tomb of Æthelwold, and was told to take with him a monk of Winchester, of whom he had never heard before, and that he would lead him to the resting-place of the holy bishop. What need of more? He went to Winchester, and calling to him the monk by name (he was Wulstan, the precentor), he asked him to be his guide to the sarcophagus of the holy man, and related to him the vision. Then the monk took the blind man to the tomb of the saint, and he returned seeing, and not needing a guide.

"Also Alphege, the successor of Saint Æthelwold, has told us that he himself had sent a thief, after his being flogged, into prison, and when the thief had been long under punishment Saint Æthelwold appeared to him in a dream, and said to him, 'Why, miserable one, dost thou lie so long stretched in the pillory?' But he, recognising the saint, whom he had often seen during his mortal life, answered, 'My lord, I am undergoing the punishment I deserve, and I am tormented in consequence of the just judgment of the bishop, because I have not ceased from my thefts.' Then the saint said, 'Cease now, miserable one, cease, and be loosed from the bonds of this prison.' So the thief rose up absolved, and came to Bishop Alphege, and related to him what had been done for him in detail, and he dismissed him to go away without further punishment. Therefore the faithfulness of the Holy Trinity and of the true Unity shines forth by wonderful signs in the merits of the saints, to which Trinity be honour and dominion through eternal ages. Amen."

From the Chronicle of Abingdon Monastery, vol. ii. p. 277 (Rolls Series)

"Æthelwold, a monk of Glastonbury, a disciple of St. Dunstan, having accepted the post of abbot of Abingdon by the command of King Edred, found there the monastery which abbot Heane built, ruined and destroyed by the heathen, but the twelve cells of the monks, and the twelve chapels that abbot Heane had constructed, still remained, and he ordered these to be preserved as they were. Then St. Æthelwold began to build a church having this form; the chancel was round, (no doubt meaning round at the east end), and the church was round, being double the length of the chancel, the tower was also round. He made the organ with his own hands. He himself made the wheel called golden, and which is covered with plates of gold, and twelve lamps round the wheel, and numberless little bells round the wheel. All these things on the coming of the Normans were broken up by a certain sacristan of the church, who came from Jumièges, and he carried off the gold and the silver of this wheel, worth forty pounds, and precious ornaments and many gold and silver vases, which St. Æthelwold had placed there, all into Normandy. And St. Æthelwold made a tablet over the altar, in which St. Mary and the 12 apostles were represented in carving. It was of pure gold and silver, and was of the value of three hundred pounds. This tablet was broken off by abbot Vincentius, and he gave it to King Henry the son of the Bastard, for the freedom of the market of Abingdon, and for the

freedom of the hundred of Horingmere, which liberties King Edward had given to the Church of Abingdon. He also made three crosses of gold and silver of the length of four feet, which crosses were broken and the inlaid work taken out in the time of King Stephen. Moreover he made two bells with his own hands and he added brass mortars, and church vases.

"Also he imported the rules of St. Benedict from the monastery of Fleury. He formed the conduit for water which flows under the dormitory to the water which is called Hokke, and built the mill houses that stand under the court. And when the workmen were digging in the Thames near the monastery of St. Helen, they found in a sarcophagus lying in deep sand an iron cross that is now called the Black Cross."

It should be noted that another Life of Æthelwold still exists; it is contained in the *Annales Ordinis Sancti Benedicti*, by Mabillon, and is by Wulstan, a monk of Winchester, and a contemporary of Ælfric. It has been doubted which of the two Lives is the oldest, but experts have decided that the Life by Ælfric is the original, and that with some reminiscences of Wulstan's own, he has plagiarised extensively from Ælfric.

CHAPTER X

A COLLOQUY, FOR EXERCISING BOYS IN SPEAKING LATIN; FIRST COMPILED BY ÆLFRIC, AND ADDED TO BY ÆLFRIC BATA, HIS DISCIPLE[1]

Scholar. We boys beg you, O Master, to teach us to speak Latin correctly, for we are ignorant, and we speak badly.

Master. What do you wish to talk about?

Scholar. We do not care what we talk about, as long as our speech is correct, and useful, and not foolish, or base.

Master. Are you willing to be flogged while learning?

Scholar. We would rather be flogged that we may learn, than remain ignorant, but we know that you are kindly, and that you will not lay strokes upon us, unless we oblige you to do so.

[1] This is translated from Thorpe's *Analecta Saxonica*. The MS. that he took it from is MS. Cott. Tib. A. 3. Latin, with an interlinear Saxon gloss. Some critics think the gloss was added later, but Thorpe supposes it by Ælfric, *v.* p. vii in his Introduction. There is another MS., including the Grammar and some other colloquies, in the library of St. John's College, Oxford. This MS. is being edited by Mr. W. H. Stevenson, M.A., Fellow and Librarian of that college.

Master. I ask you what you are to talk about? What work have you?

Scholar. I am preparing to be a monk, and every day I sing seven times with the brethren, and I am busy with reading and singing; yet in the meantime I wish to learn to converse in the Latin language.

Master. What do these companions of yours know?

Scholar. Some are ploughboys, some shepherds, some oxherds, some also are huntsmen, some fishermen, some fowlers, some chapmen, some tailors, some salters, some bakers in the place.

Master. What do you say, Ploughboy, how do you carry on your work?

Ploughboy. O Master, I have to work far too much; I go out at dawn, driving the oxen to the field, and I yoke them to the plough; I dare not in the severest weather lie hid at home, for fear of my lord; and when I have yoked the oxen together, and fastened the ploughshare to the plough, I have to plough a whole acre every day, or more.

Master. Have you any companion?

Ploughboy. I have a boy who threatens the oxen with a goad, and he is also hoarse with the cold and his shouting.

Master. What more do you perform in the day?

Ploughboy. Certainly I do more besides that. I have to supply the mangers of the oxen with hay, and give them water, and carry their dung outside.

Master. O indeed! This is a great labour.

Ploughboy. Yes, it is a great labour that I have to fulfil, for I am not free.

Master. What do you say, Shepherd, have you any work?

Shepherd. Indeed, I have. In early morning I drive my sheep to the pastures, and I stand by them, in heat and cold, with dogs, lest the wolves should devour them, and I bring them back to their folds, and milk them twice a day, and I move their folds besides. I also make butter and cheese, and I am faithful to my lord.

Master. Oxherd, what do you work at?

Oxherd. O Master, I labour much. When the ploughman unyokes the oxen, I lead them to the pastures, and all night I stand by them watching against thieves, and then, early in the morning, I give them over to the ploughman, well fed and watered.

Master. Is that boy one of your companions?

Oxherd. He is.

Master. Can you do anything?

Huntsman. One craft I know.

Master. Which is that?

Huntsman. I am a huntsman.

Master. Whose?

Huntsman. The King's.

Master. In what way do you practise your art?

Huntsman. I make myself nets, and set them in a fitting spot, and I urge on my dogs, to chase the wild animals, till unawares they get into the nets, and so they are entangled, and I cut their throats when in the nets.

Master. Don't you know how to hunt without nets?

Huntsman. Yes, I am able to hunt without nets.

Master. How do you manage that?

Huntsman. I hunt the wild animals with swift

dogs. I take stags, and boars, and fallow deer, and goats, and sometimes hares.

Master. Were you hunting to-day?

Huntsman. I was not, because it is the Lord's Day, but yesterday I was hunting.

Master. What did you catch?

Huntsman. I took the stags in nets, and I cut the throat of the boar.

Master. How was it that you were daring enough to cut the throat of the boar?

Huntsman. The dogs drove him towards me, and I, standing towards him, suddenly cut his throat.

Master. You were very daring then.

Huntsman. A huntsman must not be fearful, for a number of various beasts haunt the woods.

Master. How do you dispose of what you have caught?

Huntsman. I give whatever I catch to the King, as I am his huntsman.

Master. And what does he give you?

Huntsman. He clothes and feeds me well, and sometimes he gives me a horse, or a bracelet, that I may the more willingly practise my art. [Anglo-Saxon men were fond of wearing bracelets.]

Master. What craft do you know?

Fisherman. I am a fisherman.

Master. And what do you gain by your craft?

Fisherman. Food, and clothing, and money.

Master. How do you catch the fish?

Fisherman. I get into a boat, and place my nets in the river, and I throw in a hook, and baskets, and whatever they catch I take.

Master. What if your fishes are not clean?

Fisherman. I throw the unclean away, and take the clean ones for food.

Master. Where do you sell your fish?

Fisherman. In the city.

Master. Who are your purchasers?

Fisherman. The citizens. I cannot catch as many as I could sell.

Master. What kinds of fish do you catch?

Fisherman. Eels and pike, minnows and joltheads, trout and lampreys, and any fish that swim in the river.

Master. Why don't you fish in the sea?

Fisherman. I do sometimes, but it is a long way to the sea, so I seldom go thither.

Master. What do you catch in the sea?

Fisherman. Herrings and salmon, dolphins and sturgeons, oysters and crabs, mussels and winkles, cockles, plaice, soles and lobsters, and the like.

Master. Are you desirous of catching a whale?

Fisherman. I am not.

Master. Why is that?

Fisherman. Because catching a whale is a dangerous business. I prefer to go on the river in my own boat rather than to accompany a number of boats for hunting a whale.

Master. How is that?

Fisherman. Because I like better to catch a fish that I can kill, than a fish that by one blow can drown or put to death both myself and my companions.

Master. Yet there are many, who catch whales, and escape the dangers and make great gain thereby.

Fisherman. You speak the truth, but I dare not, for my mind is slothful.

Master. Fowler, what have you to say? How do you deceive the birds?

Fowler. I have many ways of deceiving the birds; sometimes by nets, sometimes by snares, sometimes by lime, sometimes by whistling, sometimes by a hawk, sometimes by a trap.

Master. Have you a hawk?

Fowler. I have one.

Master. Do you know how to tame them?

Fowler. Yes, I know how. What use would they be to me, unless I knew how to tame them?

Huntsman. Pray give me a hawk.

Fowler. Willingly, if you will give me in return a swift dog. What sort of hawk do you want, a large one, or of the smaller kind?

Huntsman. Give me a large one.

Master. How do you feed your hawks?

Fisherman. They feed themselves, and me in the winter, and in the spring I let them fly away to the wood, and I catch young ones in the autumn and tame them.

Master. And why do you allow those whom you have tamed to fly away from you?

Fowler. Because I do not like feeding them in the summer, for they eat too much.

Master. Yet many persons keep the hawks which they have tamed through the summer, that they may have them ready again.

Fowler. Yes, they do, but I am not inclined to bestow so much labour on them, as I know how to catch others, and many of them.

Master. What have you to say, Merchant?

Merchant. I maintain that I am useful to the King, and to the nobles, and to the wealthy, and to the whole people.

Master. How so?

Merchant. I go on board ship, with my merchandise. I sail to regions beyond the sea, and sell my goods, and buy valuable produce that is not made in this country, and I bring it you here. I face great dangers in crossing the ocean and sometimes I suffer shipwreck, with the loss of all my goods, hardly escaping with my life.

Master. What kinds of things do you bring us?

Merchant. Purple and silk, precious stones and gold, various sorts of clothing, pigments, wine and oil, ivory, copper, brass and tin, sulphur and glass, and the like.

Master. Are you willing to sell your things just as you bought them there?

Merchant. By no means. If I did so, what good would my labour be to me? I wish to sell dearer here, than I bought there, that I may gain some profit, to keep myself, and my wife and son.

Master. You, Shoemaker, what do you produce?

Shoemaker. My craft is indeed very useful and necessary for you.

Master. How is that?

Shoemaker. I buy skins and hides, and prepare them, and make various kinds of sandals, slippers, shoes, and high boots, besides bridles, harness, and other horse trappings, halters and spurs; and also leather bottles, flasks, purses, and bags.[1]

[1] The order of some of these names has been transposed in the

Master. Oh, Salter, of what value is your craft to us?

Salter. My craft is of great value to all of you; none of you would enjoy his dinner or supper unless my craft were his entertainer.

Master. How is that?

Salter. What man would enjoy pleasant meats, without the savour of salt? Who could fill his pantry, or his storeroom without my craft? Behold, all your butter and cheese would perish, unless I were near to be their keeper, and you could not use your herbs without me.

Master. What have you to say, Baker? What is the use of your craft, or can we live our life without you?

Baker. You might indeed, for a while, live your life without me, but not for long, nor well; for without my craft, every table would seem empty, and without bread all food would be distasteful. I stablish the heart of man, I am the strength of men, and even the little ones cannot pass me by.

Master. What shall we say of the Cook? Do we in any way need his craft?

Cook. If you drive me out of your society, you will have to eat your vegetables and your meat raw, and anyhow you cannot have good gravy without my craft.

Master. We do not care about your craft, nor is it necessary for us, for we can ourselves cook the things that need to be cooked, and roast what has to be roasted.

translation so as to bring together those that appear to have the same meaning. It is by no means easy to identify the signification of these names.

Cook. If therefore you drive me out, to do as you say, then you will all be servants, and none of you will be master, and yet without my craft you will not be able to bite your food.

Master. O Monk, who hast spoken to me already, behold I find that you have good companions, and very necessary ones, who are they?

Scholar. I have smiths, iron smiths, goldsmiths, silver smiths, brass smiths, carpenters, and many other workmen skilled in various arts.

Master. Have you any wise councillor?

Scholar. Certainly we have. How could our society be ruled if we had no councillor?

(*Here the Councillor comes forward.*)

Master. What say you, Wise one? What art seems to you to hold the first place amongst all these?

Councillor. I say to thee, that the service of God holds the primary place among these arts, as we read in the Gospel—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Master. And which do you think among secular crafts holds the first place?

Councillor. Agriculture; because the ploughman feeds us all.

(*The Blacksmith now speaks.*)

Blacksmith. How does the ploughman get his plough or his ploughshare, or his goad, but by my craft? How does the fisherman obtain his hook, or the shoemaker his awl, or the tailor his needle, but by my work?

Councillor. What you say is indeed true: but we

all prefer to be guests of the ploughman, rather than yours; for the ploughman gives us bread and drink, and what do you give us in your workshop but sparks of iron, and the noise of hammers striking, and bellows blowing?

(*The Woodman speaks.*)

Woodman. Which of you does not avail himself of my craft, when I make houses, and various utensils and boats for you all?

Blacksmith. O Woodman, why do you talk like that, when you could not pierce a single aperture without my craft?

Councillor. O friends, and good workmen! Let us quickly cease from these contentions, and let there be peace and concord between us, and let each of us help the other by his art, and let us always meet at the ploughman's, where we find food for ourselves, and fodder for our horses, and this advice I give to workmen, that each should diligently practise his craft: for every one who forsakes his art is forsaken by his art: whether thou art a priest, or a monk, or a layman, or a scholar, practise thyself in this, be what thou art, for it is a great loss and shame to a man to be unwilling to be what he is, and what he ought to be.

Master. O boys, how does this conversation please you?

Scholar. We are indeed well pleased with it, but your words are deep, and your speech goes beyond our age; pray speak to us as remembering our youthful minds, that we may understand what you are talking about.[1]

[1] The critics consider that Ælfric Bata did not improve upon his

Master. I will ask you why you are so diligent in learning?

Scholar. It is because we do not wish to be like brute animals, that know nothing but grass and water.

Master. And what then is your wish?

Scholar. We wish to be wise.

Master. With what kind of wisdom? Do you wish to be clever turncoats, taking many shapes, cunning in lies, acute in speech; talking fairly, and thinking evil, given to using pleasant words, while cherishing guile within, like a sepulchre, painted outside, but full of foulness inside?

Scholar. We do not wish to be wise in this way, for he is not wise who deceives his own self by pretences.

Master. Then how do you desire to be wise?

Scholar. We wish to be simple, without hypocrisy, and wise in avoiding the evil, and in doing what is good, but up to now your discussion with us is more profound than our years can take in; pray speak to us in our way, and not so profoundly.

Master. I will do as you ask. You, my boy, what have you done to-day?

Scholar. I have done many things. This night, when I heard the call, I rose from my bed, and went out to the church, and sang nocturns with the brethren; then we sang of all the saints, and the matin song of praise; after that prime, and the seven psalms, with litanies, and the first mass, then terce, and we performed the mass of the day, after

master's work by his additions. The above remark seems unreasonable, as the speech is plain enough.

that we sang sext; then we ate and drank, and had our sleep, and rose up again, and sang nones, and now we are here before you, prepared to hear what you may say to us.

Master. When do you mean to sing vespers and compline?

Scholar. When it is the time for them.

Master. Have you been flogged to-day?

Scholar. I have not, for I behaved with caution.

Master. And how was it with your companions?

Scholar. Why do you ask me about that? I dare not reveal our secrets to you. Each one knows whether he has been flogged, or not.

Master. What do you eat in the day?

Scholar. I am allowed meat, because I am still a boy, living under the rod.

Master. What do you eat besides?

Scholar. Vegetables and eggs, fish and cheese, butter and beans, and all clean things I eat, with giving of thanks.

Master. You are very voracious, to eat everything that is put before you.

Scholar. I am not such a glutton as to be able to eat all these kinds of food at the same meal.

Master. Then how do you manage?

Scholar. I eat sometimes this food, and sometimes that, with moderation, as befits a monk; I do not eat voraciously, for I am not a glutton.

Master. And what do you drink?

Scholar. Beer, if I have any, or water, if I have no beer.

Master. Don't you drink wine?

Scholar. I am not rich enough to buy myself wine;

and wine is not a drink for boys, or foolish persons, but for elders, and wise men.

Master. Where do you sleep?

Scholar. In the dormitory with the brethren.

Master. Who rouses you up for nocturns?

Scholar. Sometimes I hear the call, and rise, sometimes the master rouses me up sharply with a rod.

Master. O good boys, and pleasant scholars, your instructor exhorts you to be obedient to the rules of divine discipline, and to behave yourselves decorously, wherever you may be. Walk with steadiness when you hear the bells of the church, enter into the house of prayer, and bend reverently before the holy altars. Stand in good order, and sing together, ask forgiveness for your faults, and go out again, without playing the fool, into the cloister or the schoolroom.

APPENDIX A

The following information has been kindly given me by Professor Skeat:—

A great many persons in Anglo-Saxon days were known by the same names. The Professor states that there were nearly sixty men called Æthelweard, over fifty persons called Ælfric are recorded, and more than thirty called Æthelmær. They are given in Searle's *Monasticon Anglo-Saxonicum*. The diphthong "æ" was pronounced sometimes short, and sometimes long, according to the etymology of the word. In "Ælfric" the "æ" is short, owing to its origin, namely, from "ælf," "elf": "ric" meaning "powerful," or "power," or "kingdom." "Ælfred" is from "ælf," "elf," and "rede," "advice." The "Æ" is also short in "Æthel," often written Ethel. But the "æ" in Æthelmær is long.

The Professor refers us to Sweet's *A.-S. Primer*, where it is shown that the short A.-S. "æ" has the sound of the "a" in "cat," "Alfred" and "Alfric," which latter gives us the right pronunciation of Ælfric. The long A.-S. "æ" is a difficult sound till you get used to it, but it is very near the "a" in the modern English name "Mary."

APPENDIX B

THE LORD'S PRAYER IN ANGLO-SAXON[1]

MATTHEW VI.

Faeder ûre, Thû the eart on heofenum,
Father our, Thou that art in heaven,
Sî thîn nama gehalgod,
Be Thy name hallowed,
To becume thîn rîce,
Come Thy Kingdom,
Geweorthe thîn willa on eorthan, swâ swâ on heofenum,
Be done Thy will on earth, so as in heaven,
Ure dægwamlican hlâf syle us to dæg,
our daily loaf give us to-day,
And forgyf us ûre gyltas, swâ swâ we forgifath ûrum gyltendum,
and forgive us our debts, so as we forgive our debtors,
And ne gelæde thû us on costnunge, ac alŷs us of yfle.
and not lead Thou us into temptation, but loose us of evil.
Sothlice. (*Amen.*)

[1] The *th* is given in modern letters, as well as the other letters. Earle's *Philology of the English Tongue*, p. 30.

APPENDIX C

LATIN PREFACE TO VOL. II. OF THE *CATHOLIC HOMILIES*

Ælfric, a humble little servant of Jesus Christ, wishes to the honourable and lovable Archbishop Sigeric perpetual well-being in the Lord. I confess to thy Bountifulness, Venerable Lord, that I think myself altogether unworthy and presuming, in that I have taken upon myself to address thee by religious discourses, namely, in the little book which I have lately set forth under thine authority; but inasmuch as thou hast only too amply praised the result of my study, and hast willingly accepted that translation, I have hastened to form this following book, according as the grace of God has guided me. I have tried to do this avoiding garrulous verbosity, and strange expressions, and seeking rather with pure and plain words, in the language of their nation, to be of use to my hearers, by simple speech, than to be praised for the composition of skilful discourse, which my simplicity has never acquired.

And though I was much shaken by the incursions of injurious pirates, after I had sent the previous little book to thy Holiness, yet being unwilling to be found false to my promises, with a suffering mind I have carried through the present work. In the former work I had arranged forty sermons; in this one the number of discourses is not less, though some of them are reduced to greater brevity.

This work I commit to thine authority, to be corrected, as I did the former, earnestly praying thee not to refrain from wiping out any stains of evil heresies that may be found therein, for I would rather receive blame from thy Benignity, than praise from the ignorant for attractions which are not well founded. I beg thy Benignity to read through this translation, as thou didst the previous one, and to judge whether it should be given to the faithful, or cast aside. The blame of the envious will not disturb me if the granting of this favour is not displeasing to thy gracious authority. Fare thee well always in Christ. Amen.

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